

Gosport's Townscape

A Townscape Assessment of the Borough of Gosport



Michael Ricketts Associates

2013

TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT FOR THE BOROUGH OF GOSPORT – May 2013

	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
• Overview	1
• Status and Purpose	1
• Location and setting	1
• Historic Context	2
• Townscape - Character and Appearance	4
• Character Areas – the appraisal approach	7
2.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE CHARACTER AREAS	10
• Survey - Setting and development background	10
• Form – urban development pattern, townscape features, qualities	10
• Key Townscape Characteristics	19
• Opportunities	20
1: WATERFRONT AND TOWN CENTRE	11
2: OLDER URBAN CORE	22
3: ALVERSTOKE, ANGLESEY AND PRIVETT	33
4: STOKES BAY AND BROWNDOWN	42
5: ALVER VALLEY	47
6: LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT	52
7: ROWNER, BRIDGEMARY AND PEEL COMMON	61
8: SULTAN AND HISTORIC FORTS	69
9: FRATER AND BEDENHAM	73
3.0 CONCLUSION	79
Gosport’s Townscape and Opportunities	79
APPENDIX 1:	
Explanation of symbols on Character Maps	83

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Overview

1.1 Gosport is a coastal conurbation in south-east Hampshire, located between Southampton and Portsmouth and forming part of the wider south Hampshire conurbation which stretches to Havant in the east. A narrow stretch of water on the eastside, separates Gosport from its immediate neighbour Portsmouth and Gosport's military and industrial history has been heavily influenced by its proximity to that city. Both Gosport and Portsmouth have a rich and unique heritage, primarily due to the long association with the Royal Navy and the defence of Portsmouth Harbour. This history has produced a densely populated and diverse development pattern, heavily influenced by its military connections. Contrastingly, parts of the coastline on both sides of Portsmouth Harbour are designated for their nature conservation value, thus the Borough demands proper consideration to appraise and recognise its special character, its identity and townscape qualities.

Status and Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of this townscape assessment is to determine and appraise the character of the Borough, in order to inform the Borough Council's Local Plan and to provide background information for the Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The document is not intended to be a detailed analysis of every part of the Borough but rather is intended to provide an overview from which more detailed action may be taken at a future date.
- 1.3 This assessment is divided into three sections. This first section provides an overview of the Borough, together with some of the essential historical background and describes the process for the approach for the more detailed assessment. The second and largest section sets out the assessment by concentrating on particular 'character' areas identified within the Borough. The final section will draw together the key characteristics and special features highlighted in each character area which provide distinctiveness and are worthy of safeguarding, as well as identifying any opportunities for enhancement.

Location and Setting

1.4 Topographically, Gosport occupies a relatively flat and low lying coastal landscape, which forms a promontory with Portsmouth Harbour to the east and the Solent coastline to the south and southwest. The geology of this landscape consists of multi-layered Quaternary deposits of silts, sands, gravels, various clays and some loam across the area, broadly divided in two groups known as Barton and Bracklesham. Coastal views to the south are dominated by the Isle of Wight and Fawley to the west. Four tidal creeks extend westwards from the Harbour across the peninsula, Bedenham Lake and Frater Lake in the north, Forton Lake just to the north of the town centre and Haslar Lake to the south. The latter extends inland to Stoke Lake and as far as the village of Alverstoke, which was historically the principal settlement of the area.

- 1.5 To the west a small river, the Alver, flows south to the Solent and its valley forms a landscape gap which separates Gosport from Lee-on-the-Solent to the west. This narrow corridor of relatively open countryside and former gravel workings (many of which are now important for their nature conservation value) is being developed in the context of the Alver Valley Country Park. The northwest part of the town is bounded by 'urban fringe' countryside and the open aspect of the Daedalus airfield. The main highway corridor (A32) between Gosport and Fareham saw urban development spread along it during the 20th century, connecting the two settlements.

Historic Context

- 1.6 While this assessment is not intended to be an historical study the Borough's past, particularly its military role, does inevitably frame its physical form today and must be referred to. Some Neolithic artefacts have been found on the peninsula and there is some limited evidence for Bronze Age settlement. There is also some potential for Pleistocene archaeology within the gravel and brick earth deposits that make up the peninsula. The earliest documentary evidence directly referenced to Gosport dates from 1241, although both Alverstoke and Rowner are referred to in the Saxon era and mentioned in the Domesday Book. Dating the origins of Gosport town centre is more difficult, but it seems to have developed in the medieval period, possibly as one central High Street with parallel roads to north and south feeding to open fields, or as a basic grid pattern of streets which survive in part to this day. By the mid-16th Century the town was described, perhaps somewhat dismissively, as a 'small fishing village', but the rise of Portsmouth as a naval base improved the fortunes of the town. Strong links to the dockyard were developed and brewing, sail-making and boat building became significant local industries.
- 1.7 The military importance of Portsmouth Harbour and the threat of attack from the 15th Century onwards, led to the development of defences for the area. A 'Blockhouse' (fortified tower) was constructed at the western entrance to the harbour around 1417, and as part of Henry VIII's extensive improvements to defences along the south coast, a 'castle' (possibly a similar fortified tower) was built at 'Haselworth' (now the site of Fort Monckton), with a further earthwork defences close to Blockhouse. Gosport was provided with extensive earthwork defences in the late 17th Century following the English Civil War, during which time Portsmouth had been bombarded by the Parliamentarians from Gosport waterfront. This, combined with the immediate threat raised by the Dutch Wars, led to a design by Sir Bernard de Gomme being constructed. These defences completely enclosed the town and effectively constrained its development. Around 1760 the defences were extended northwards and also enclosed Priddy's Hard and the military (both army and navy) used the opportunity to begin the development of a number of functions close to the harbour. In Gosport these included: the naval hospital at Haslar in 1745; Royal Clarence Victualling Yard; and the Ordnance Depot at Priddy's Hard. Large barracks were also built at Forton and later immediately within the ramparts (St George Barracks). A series of earthwork artillery redoubts were constructed covering Stokes Bay around 1780, during the American War of Independence and Fort Monckton was completed just prior to the French Revolution. The intermittent threat from the French from the late 1850s led to further extensive

defensive structures being built. These were the famous Palmerston Forts at Rowner, Elson, Brockhurst, Grange and Gomer together with extensive moats and batteries covering Stokes Bay. Blockhouse, which had developed as a fort during the 18th Century, was significantly improved and remodelled in the 1840s. All of these works were designed to protect the town and harbour from landward attack, together with the coastal batteries and Fort Gilkicker on the southern most point.

- 1.8 A number of settlements within the Borough are of great age, some being of Saxon origin and many medieval. Notable examples are Alverstoke, Rowner, Elson, Brockhurst, Lee, Forton, and Upper and Lower Bedenham. Some, such as Rowner, appear to have comprised a scattered community of farms, whilst others, such as Elson or Brockhurst, appear to have had a small core of buildings as part of a wider rural community. The coastline from Bedenham to Fleetlands had 'saltings' shown on a map of 1626, where sea salt was farmed. This appears to be the only known early local industry outside of farming, fishing and boatbuilding. The military expansion of the town would certainly have affected the rural economy and certainly provided opportunity to provide crops and cattle for the military, as well as seeing the gradual intrusion and expansion of new development. These included the 17th Century hospital, then prison, at Forton; the suburban development of Regency housing along Bury Road and in Anglesey (both influenced by the demand for officers' housing), and the expansion of 'hards' (slipways) at Hardway: including one for convicts. The appearance of 'Newtown' or Bingham Town (now Stoke Road) circa 1807 was a speculative development for new housing beyond the ramparts which undoubtedly sparked other ventures. Historically the creeks protruded much further into the peninsula and had a major impact upon the formation of certain settlements due to their extent: such as Alverstoke, Forton and Gosport itself.
- 1.9 The Alver Valley, which has been left largely undisturbed by surrounding development, includes settlement going back to Neolithic times. Saxon buildings have been identified by archaeologists north of Howe Road and Grange Farm originated as a Cistercian monastic farm of the medieval period. Early maps of the area suggest that there were a series of rudimentary water meadows stretching down the length of the river which may be of monastic origin (the Cistercians being experts at exploiting the landscape). How much of this survives has not been established. With the construction of the Palmerston Forts, together with the coming of the railway in 1840, connecting Gosport with London, there was a period of great housing expansion which continued up to the Second World War, in order to supply the local labour needs and that of Portsmouth.
- 1.10 During the Second World War, Gosport like Portsmouth and Southampton suffered bombing raids, which destroyed some of the historic core of the town, although it was the post war slum clearance programme, and lack of funds to restore buildings, that led to more extensive demolitions (including nearly all of the town, north and south of the High Street). This resulted in the rebuilding of large areas of the old town and waterfront, including two landmark residential towers overlooking the Harbour, establishing the modern town that one sees today. Archaeologically, however, the town centre remains rich in potential finds: notably the site of Fort Charles beneath the Endeavour Quay site. Beyond the town centre large areas of housing development continued to spread northwards and westwards to meet the then demands of the main

local employer, the Ministry of Defence. The huge estates in Rowner, Grange and Bridgemary were the result.

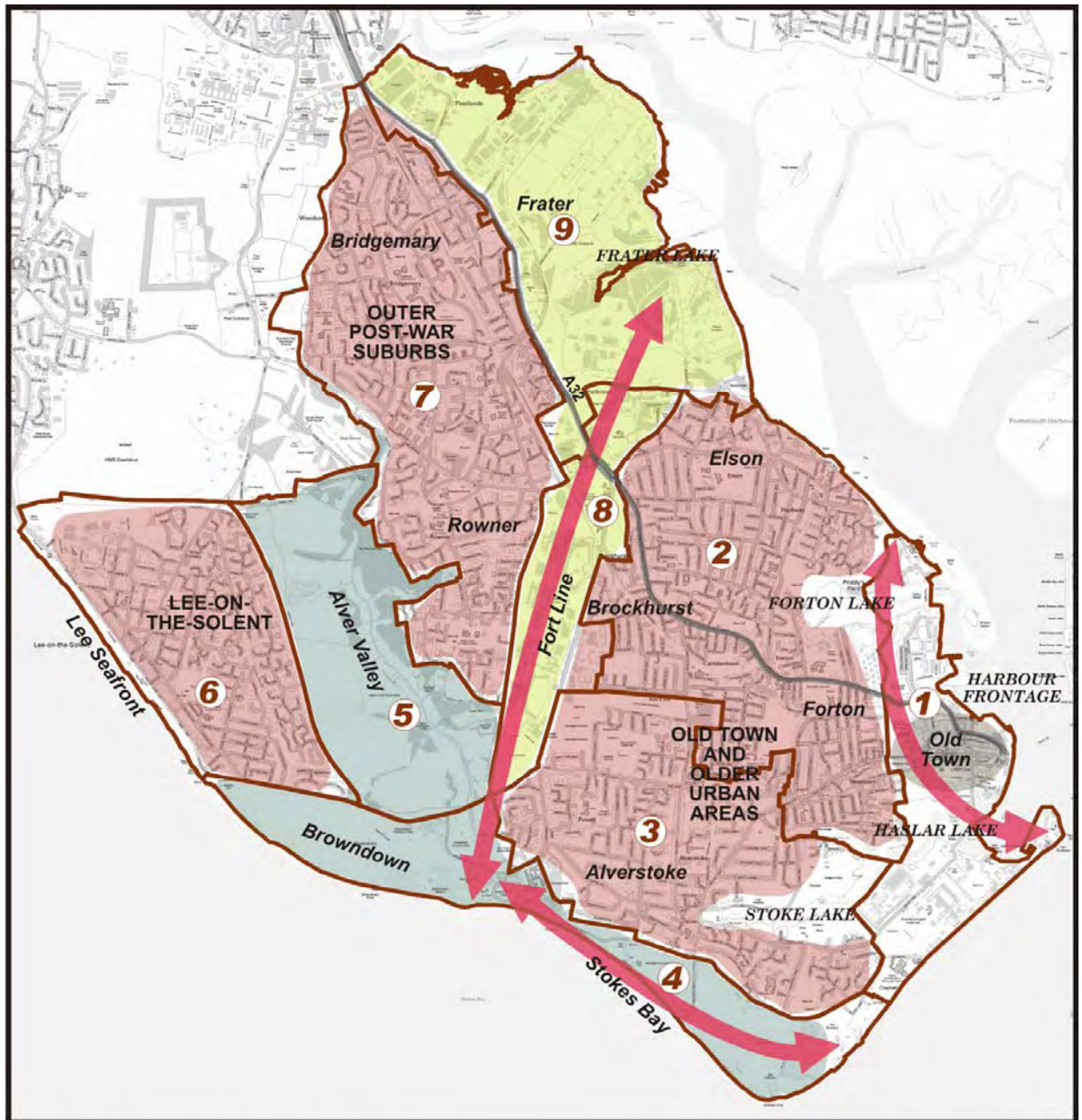
- 1.11 To the west of the Alver Valley lies Lee-on-the-Solent which is an entirely separate settlement within the Borough. Prior to 1884, although there was a core of buildings on Manor Way, it was effectively a small scattered settlement of isolated properties within a landscape that had changed little over the centuries. In the late 19th Century a scheme was drawn up to promote the area as a seaside resort, which resulted in a seafront parade, pier and village centre. This speculative development was not a great success, undoubtedly due to the impact on the area of World War One and the 1920s recession. Although the 1930s became its dominant era it never quite achieved its original vision. Since the Second World War the settlement has expanded greatly due to its location as a popular residential suburb. Daedalus airfield on the north side of Lee was developed in the First World War as an ideal location for a naval aviation base and prevented the development of the settlement westwards.

Townscape Character and Appearance




- 1.12 Defining the character of an area is critical to understanding its identity or 'sense of place', i.e. the form and features which make it notable or visually memorable. This can also be referred to as 'Townscape'. What is it that makes one place attractive and another less so? Why is this important? What does a town's physical form actually mean to the people who live there, or to the visitor? Townscape or urban character may be defined as a combination of those factors or distinguishing features that qualify or confer a certain theme to a town or district, including notable buildings, architectural styles, development layout, land uses, geographical or landscape elements, materials, details, textures – i.e. a recognisable identity. This can be appreciated by simply having a personal relationship with a place, or by an independent visual appraisal. Perhaps put simply – what is memorable about a place (its 'sense of place'), or how is it understood as a place (sometimes called 'legibility in urban design academic and professional circles). This can be reflected in identifying notable features (both natural and man-made), main routes, a defined centre (nodes) or important views which make up its form or define an area. Perhaps the question in the end for any assessment is what can be done to make a town's image more relevant or memorable to the resident or visitor? This will mean identifying the important features and special character of places which are worthy of protection and identifying aspects and issues for improvement.
- 1.13 The essential character and image of Gosport lies in its landscape setting – at a strategic peninsular location on the west side of Portsmouth Harbour and how this unique relationship with the harbour has shaped the Borough's development over the last three centuries. Overall, the Borough can simply be divided into three main urban parts (see Plan 1), namely 1) Old Town and Older Urban Area: Including the old town centre of Gosport and hinterland enclosed by open fields marking the line of the town's historic fortifications. Beyond these the older, more established, urban settlements extend up to the line of the Palmerston Forts. 2) Outer Post War Suburbs: the extensive post war development stretching from Rowner northwards beyond the Palmerston Forts. 3) Lee-on-the-Solent: A distinct, separate community with its own identity and character.

These main urban blocks break down into 9 individual character areas which have been identified and are identified on Plan 1. The strategic elements of the Borough's townscape are listed in 1.14.

Plan 1 Gosport Main Townscape Areas



- 1** Waterfront and Town Centre
- 2** Older Urban Core
- 3** Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett
- 4** Stokes Bay and Browndown
- 5** Alver Valley
- 6** Lee-on-the-Solent
- 7** Rowner, Bridgemary and Peel Common
- 8** Sultan and Historic Forts
- 9** Frater / Bedenham

-  Lines of military defences
-  Public access
-  Mostly non public access
-  Main Urban areas

1.14 **The Key Townscape Characteristics of the Borough: -**

- Strategic peninsula location on the west side of Portsmouth Harbour;
- Low lying coastal plain intersected by a series of creeks and streams from Portsmouth Harbour and the River Alver;
- Unique historical relationship with the Royal Navy and the defence of Portsmouth Harbour, which has resulted in many fortifications, waterfront and military establishments of national historic importance;
- The scattering of historic settlements (such as Elson, Forton and Brockhurst) and farmsteads surrounding the old town, which although now subsumed within the conurbation, have unique characteristics that can still be identified;
- The north-south line of the landward Palmerston Forts which originally extended from Frater to Browndown and creates a gap that divides the older residential areas in the south and east from Bridgemary, Rowner and Lee-on-the-Solent;
- The town centre and harbour waterfront enclosed by open land marking the line of historic fortifications;
- The Alver Valley forming an attractive Country Park and recreational space between the urban area of Gosport and the separate settlement of Lee-on-the-Solent and connecting to the open coastal strip of Browndown;
- The extensive open space and coastal landscape stretching from Stokes Bay to Browndown with panoramic views across the Solent and to the Isle of Wight;
- Lee-on-the-Solent, a separate residential settlement and airfield at the westernmost part of the Borough, based on a late-Victorian vision, and with an extensive promenade and shingle beach.

1.15 In addition to the above strategic elements of townscape, this overall image is complimented and enriched by the extent of Gosport's individual buildings and its unique military heritage namely:-

- 14 Scheduled Monuments, which cover most of the Borough's coastal fortifications from Priddy's Hard to Fort Gilkicker, the Palmerston Forts and the Old Town ramparts;
- Over 500 Statutorily Listed Buildings, including two Grade 1 (Ordnance Museum at Priddy's Hard and St Mary's Church, Rowner) and six Grade II* buildings;
- 16 Conservation Areas, including military sites but also contrasting such areas as the historic village of Alverstoke, the rural origins of Rowner Village or the late Regency character of Anglesey;
- Over 100 building groups of local architectural or historic importance on the Local List, which recognises the quality of more locally significant buildings and which helps contribute to a 'sense of place'.

Character Areas

1.16 Within these strategic urban areas, some nine individual 'character areas' have been broadly identified, either due to their origins, development pattern, density, form or function. They represent and define Gosport's detailed development and character over time. These will be used as a basis to determine the important townscape

characteristics in more detail in the following section of this assessment. These areas are:

- Area 1: Waterfront and Town Centre.
- Area 2: Older Urban Core
- Area 3: Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett
- Area 4: Stokes Bay and Browndown
- Area 5: The Alver Valley
- Area 6: Lee-on-the-Solent
- Area 7: Rowner, Bridgemary and Peel Common
- Area 8: Sultan and the Historic Fort Line
- Area 9: Frater and Bedenham

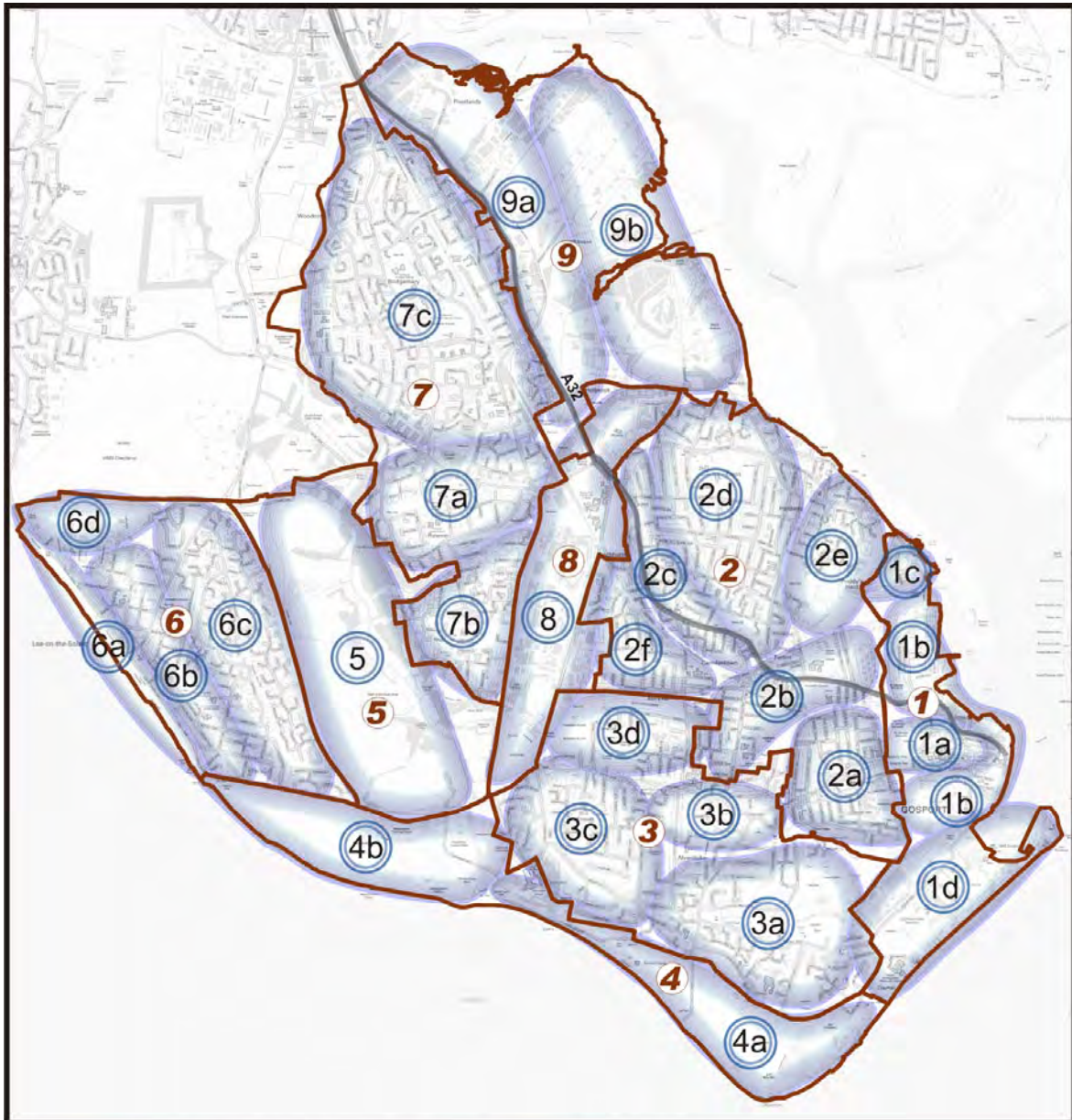
These character areas are likewise broadly divided into a series of sub-areas defined on Plan 2 (1a, 1b, 1c and so forth).

The approach to the appraisal of each character area will consist of two parts:-

- **Survey** – will describe the broad identification of the area, its location and setting, historical background, its extent, boundaries and any important entrances.
- **Form** - development pattern (layout, density, urban design), building types, architectural detail, use of space, landscape, special features.

- 1.17 Each of the Character Areas is accompanied by an annotated plan. An explanation of the symbols on the plan is provided in Appendix 1.

Plan 2 Gosport Townscape Character Areas and Character Sub-Areas



1 Waterfront and Town Centre

- 1a Town Centre-High Street
- 1b The Waterfront and A32 (Mumby Rd/South Street)
- 1c Priddy's Hard
- 1d The Haslar Peninsula

2 Older Urban Core

- 2a Stoke Road Environs
- 2b Forton
- 2c Camdentown/Brockhurst Road
- 2d Elson & Hardway
- 2e Priddy's Hard
- 2f Hermitage

3 Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett

- 3a Alverstoke, Anglesey, Clayhall
- 3b Bury Road
- 3c Privett/Gomer
- 3d Ann's Hill

4 Stokes Bay and Browdown

- 4a Stokes Bay
- 4b Browdown

5 Alver Valley

- 5 Alver Valley

6 Lee-on-the-Solent

- 6a Lee Seafront - Marine Parade
- 6b Lee Suburbs
- 6c Later Residential Estates
- 6d Daedalus

7 Rowner, Bridgemary and Peel Common

- 7a Rowner Village
- 7b Rowner South/Alver Village
- 7c Bridgemary/Peel Common

8 Sultan and Historic Forts

- 8 Sultan & Historic Forts

9 Frater / Bedenham

- 9a A32 Fareham Road/Frater
- 9b Bedenham

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE CHARACTER AREAS

Area 1: Waterfront and Town Centre

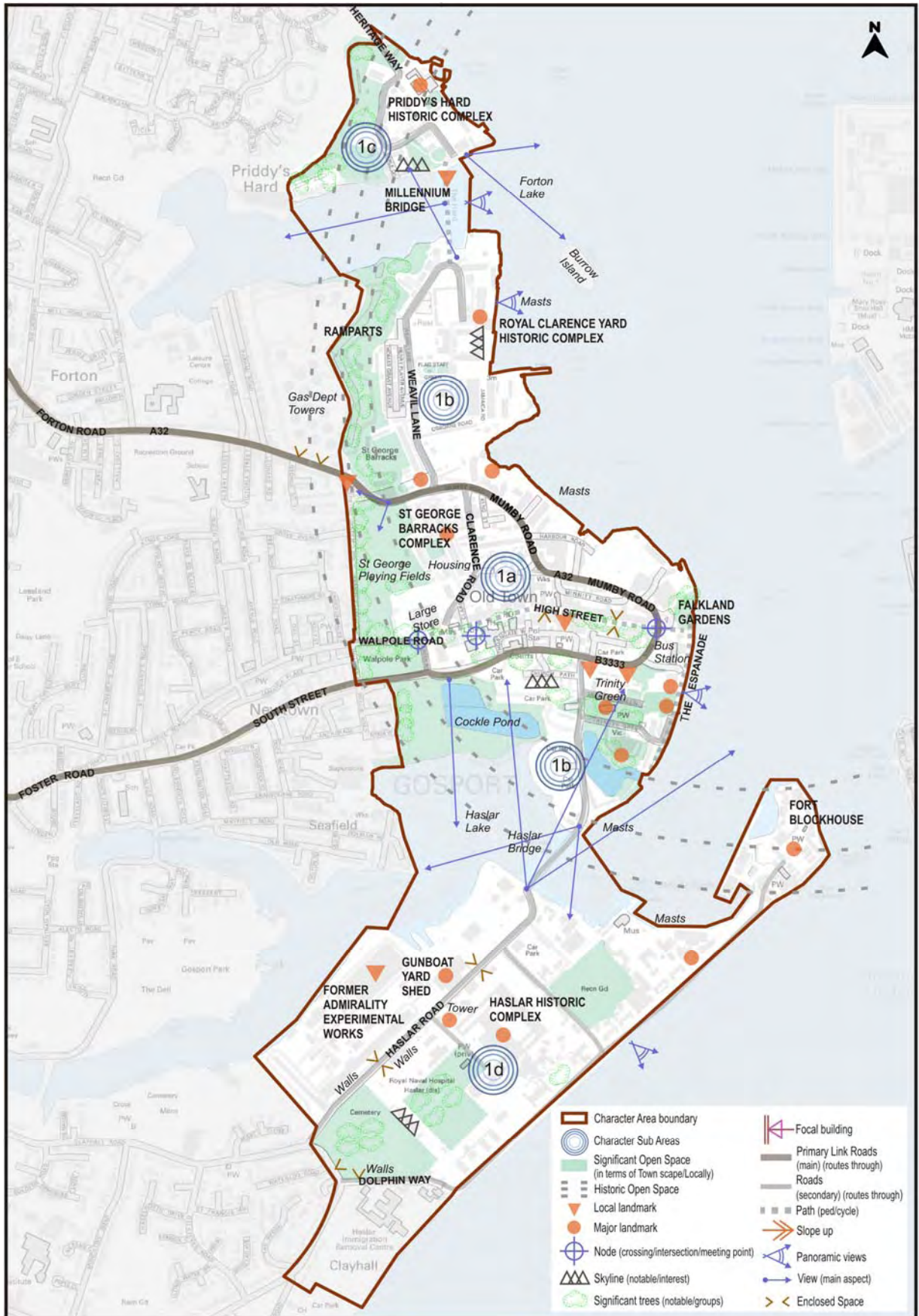
Survey

- 2.1 Location and setting: Situated on the west side of Portsmouth Harbour at the south eastern part of the coastal promontory this area contains the historic core of Gosport, together with its associated defence sites of Royal Clarence Victualling Yard, St George Barracks, and Priddy's Hard at the northern end which is separated by a creek – Forton Lake. Also separated by a creek (Haslar Lake) is the southern part of the waterfront – Haslar Peninsula which contains Fort Blockhouse, the Gunboat Yard and former Admiralty Experimental Works (now Qinetiq) and the Haslar Hospital site. The land form is mostly flat coastal plain. The A32 from the north is the main historic route into the centre.
- 2.2 Historic context: In the 16th Century, Gosport was a small fishing village, however, with the growth of Portsmouth as a naval base the 17th Century changed Gosport's economic situation by forming links with the dockyards and its increasing trade and industry. By the late 17th century it was a bustling market town and Charles II decided that Gosport should be fortified to protect Portsmouth Dockyard from landward bombardment across the harbour and the threat from the Dutch at the time. Earth ramparts and an accompanying moat were constructed around the town, and a square fort (Fort Charles), was built close to the eastern end of the High Street. Consequently development was largely contained within the defences for the next 100 years. It is not recorded as to when the grid plan of streets was laid out, but it is clearly illustrated on the de Gomme Maps of the late 17th Century together with the town's defences. Other than Fort Blockhouse on the south side of the creek there was little major development outside the town's ramparts until after 1745, when the construction of Haslar Hospital began. Weevil Brewery (later Royal Clarence Yard) and Priddy's Hard developed following the extension to the ramparts of c1760.
- 2.3 Gosport suffered from heavy bombing during the Second World War and much of its historic core was swept away in post war 'slum clearance', although the alignment of a number of historic roads remained. After the war, the centre of Gosport saw large scale clearance and rebuilding of its damaged urban structure, including high-rise flats on the waterfront and more recently the pedestrianisation of the High Street and renewal of the waterfront promenade.

Form

- 2.4 The character area can be considered as four parts, or sub-areas. These are 1a) the town centre focused on the High Street; 1b) the Waterfront and area surrounding the town centre to north and south; 1c) Priddy's Hard and 1d) the Haslar Peninsula (see Plan 3).

Plan 3 Waterfront and Town Centre



(a) Town Centre - High Street

2.5 High Street is the commercial and civic heart of the town. Orientated west-east it comprises a fairly wide street which has been pedestrianised since 1989, framed by mostly two and three storey buildings either side, gently curving to its termination at a public square at the east end where it meets Mumby Road and the waterfront area (Falkland Gardens). With the bomb damage inflicted by the Second World War and post-war clearance and redevelopment, other than the High Street, the original street grid pattern has been largely lost beyond. Signs of an early grid layout can be visualised in the number of smaller roads, lanes and alleys at the sides which subdivide the street into a series of blocks set within what would have been earlier plot divisions. This can be perhaps best appreciated looking along the central part of High Street at its junction with North Cross Street, where the uniformity and scale of the historic buildings is expressed. Towards the eastern end, past the curve of the street, the waterfront space comes into view and the Portsmouth skyline beyond. There are a number of trees positioned along the street which contribute to its character.



High Street



High Street junction with North Cross Street

2.6 Behind the main blocks of the High Street the earlier street pattern has largely been removed, resulting in larger amalgamated sites for various uses including offices, housing, service roads and car parking. At the west end of the street, a 'green north-south corridor' of open grass spaces comprising Walpole Park and a sports ground (St George Playing Fields), separates High Street via an attractive avenue of trees from Stoke Road to the west. This 'gap' broadly defines the historic space just beyond the original land fortifications that contained the old town and were the historic fields of fire that surrounded the ramparts and from which development was prohibited. It continues south and then east as far as Bastion No 1.



Historic side alley-Bemister Lane



Walpole Park

2.7 High Street comprises of a mix of new and older buildings set on a consistent back-of-pavement building line. Most are three storeys in height, (although the modern glass clad Town Hall towards the west end is up to five storeys). There are ten statutory listed buildings, the majority of which are 18th century houses, many now offices or shops. The notable Mid-19th Century red brick Church of St Mary's and its Presbytery is situated on the northside of the street. There are many Victorian commercial buildings, side-by-side with post-war development of varying quality, but they do follow the alignment and rhythm of the street with some success. At the east end, the chamfered-shape of the 'modern' development either side of the street helps define the open space thus formed at this point. Unfortunately, the connection to the waterside is visually weak, not helped by the interruption of the road and building arrangement around the ferry and bus station. There is an opportunity to make a statement and define a sense of arrival in the town centre. The Conservation Area Appraisal for the town centre provides a much more detailed appraisal of the area.



Historic and modern buildings



High Street junction with Mumby Road

2.8 Many traditional buildings have parapets with pitched roofs behind, while many 'modern' buildings have flat roofs. Materials range from the traditional red brick, with tile or slate roofs and some use of stone and stucco rendering, while the palette for later buildings is more diverse including the use of curtain-walling such as on the Town Hall. The designation of the High Street as a conservation area gives recognition to the overall historic and architectural quality of the street.

2.9 There is a good mix of commercial uses, independent shops at street level, with offices and some residential above. These, together with community and public buildings such as the Discovery Centre, Museum and the Town Hall and with a regular market, all makes for a lively atmosphere in the pedestrianised environment. In front of the Town Hall a 'modern' space has been formed – Nat Gonella Square and on the west side the larger Lawrence Square. On the northside, next to the fine row of 18th and 19th Century buildings, the brick turret and the Art Nouveau style of the Local Studies Centre and Museum. At the west end of the street, the character changes with some larger retail units including a supermarket, abutting St George Playing Fields. The uninterrupted surface treatment of High Street and civic spaces are complimented by street trees at certain points. Three pairs of 'modern' gate markers demarcate the main entry points to the High Street at Lawrence Square, Mumby Road and at the High Street's eastern end. There is an opportunity to use the surviving historic pattern of streets to help re-establish more sense of the town's traditional character and reinforce the context of the

historic buildings through good quality new build. An understanding of the historic development of the town should be used as a means of helping to reinforce a sense of place that has been eroded as a result of the post-war demolitions.



Lawrence Square-North Side



St George Playing Fields

(b) The Waterfront and A32

2.10 This sub-area forms a long harbour-side strip that wraps around the High Street, at its centre, to the north, east and south. The character of the area is dominated by the waterfront setting along Portsmouth Harbour, including its creeks, inlets and floating marinas, still with a mix of uses. Traditional commercial uses are still apparent for businesses and industries relating to yachts and leisure craft. The wide views from the waterfront are dominated by boat masts and the Portsmouth skyline beyond. The focal point of the waterfront in terms of public realm is the public space immediately to the east of the High Street where it meets Mumby Road (A32) and across to where the harbour-ferry operates. This public area has a number of uses including public gardens, waterside promenade, bus station and car park and to the south an area of housing built in the 1960s, dominated by two high-rise 16 storey residential tower blocks (Harbour Tower and Seaward Tower, with their up-dated use of pastel colours applied in vertical bands and abstract art panels at the ends) overlooking the harbour and adjacent marinas. These two landmark towers together with two smaller 11 storey towers behind, effectively identify Gosport from afar. The surrounding landscape to the esplanade was significantly enhanced in recent years by the Millennium Promenade, using quality materials and offering pedestrians wide views of Portsmouth. Nearby the formal landscape of Falkland Gardens and Trinity Green add significantly to the character of the area.



High Street from the ferry approach



The Esplanade

- 2.11 At the east end of High Street, Mumby Road joins with South Street (B3333) which then loops back westward forming the edge of the town centre. On the south side of the street, the 'modern' housing scheme, which is fairly typical of its time (rectangular blocks of two to five storeys with mostly flat, but with some pitched roofs) together with the two 11 storey blocks of flats, was designed to complement the setting of the listed Church of the Holy Trinity with its brick Campanile by Bloomfield (1889) and the fine Georgian vicarage on the southside of the square known as Trinity Green.



Trinity Green



South Street Housing

Spatially, the housing encloses the historic buildings but maintain a respectful distance defined by the surrounding trees. Beyond this, the urban landscape is open in character, with a surface car park, a pond (Cockle Pond: originally constructed as a mill pond in the late 18th Century), a small circular cafe and open grass spaces extending to the fortifications of Bastion No.1 and beyond to Haslar Lake.



Bastion No 1



Cockle Pond

- 2.12 To the north of the High Street, after the Georgian style public house the Castle Tavern, Mumby Road curves past the remaining industrial sheds and marine activities that run along the waterside, including the former historic Camper and Nicholson's marina site (now Endeavour Quay), which has some quality development associated with its location. The marina berths and boating yards continue along the waterfront, as does a public walkway. A modern four storey block of flats connects to the northside of High Street and then a dark brick, five story block of flats makes a physical wall that dominates the south side of the streetscene and the road veers north with earlier 'modern' two to four storey, medium-rise urban housing in both dark and a light buff brick.



Waterside industry



Southern end of Mumby Road

In the middle of this 'modern' urban maze of a housing scheme centred on North Street, are a few historic surprises of note, such as the Fox Inn. As the main road curves around this development, the 14 storey tower of Rope Quays on the waterside dominates the streetscene. This is a modern good quality tower and on the north side of the road junction is the Guardhouse to the former St George Barracks.



Mumby Road – flats and boats



Rope Quays tower

This is an impressive landmark entrance building with its cupola and this also marks the entrance to the Royal Clarence Yard (RCY) complex in Weevil Lane. RCY is an historic site with its granary, bake house and pump house in robust red brick. It has now been well converted to mixed use, which has managed to both retain the site's historic setting and the character of the listed buildings as well as enhance the waterfront. Opposite the junction is the southern part of the Barracks site which includes the former Soldier's Barracks in its classical style, in buff bricks and with a spectacular cast iron veranda.



St George Guardhouse



Royal Clarence Yard

2.13 The road continues northwards past the St George Playing Fields before entering the district of Forton. The old railway station comes into view on the left although partly obscured by trees on a traffic island. Now happily restored and converted into mixed use with associated complimentary modern, two/three storey housing, thus reviving its status as a local landmark. The former Railway Inn buildings adjacent provide a visual stop to where Mumby Road becomes Forton Road. On the east side at this point, by the entrance to the oil storage site, there are the historic remnants of the outer fortifications now heavily overgrown and which effectively marks the boundary of the old centre and waterfront. This change from the town centre to suburb is strongly reinforced by the swathe of open fields to the south.



View towards the former Railway Inn



St George Playing Fields

(c) Priddy's Hard

2.14 The most northerly part of the Waterfront is Priddy's Hard, which is situated on a small promontory on the north side of the creek known as Forton Lake, but is now connected to the south bank by the modern Millennium Bridge. The approach across gives a good view of this historic naval site contained by earthwork ramparts completed by 1760. It includes the Grand Magazine (Listed Grade I) and ordnance depot which contains a highly significant complex of historic buildings. They are mostly a mix of 1-2 storey red brick structures with slate roofs. Vacated by the RNAD and purchased by Gosport BC in 1994, the site now hosts a museum, together with some modern housing in a robust brown brick facing the creek, as well as having important coastal habitat and biodiversity value. It should be noted that the views from the bridge into the creek westwards towards the back of St Vincent's makes for a very tranquil tidal environment, with low development set back from the water's edges giving Forton Lake an almost semi-rural feel. There is a small natural island in the harbour to the south - Burrow Island, which is joined to Priddy's Hard by a causeway accessible at low tide. This island is the site of the 17th Century Fort James and perhaps surprisingly, is in Portsmouth City Council's jurisdiction.



Forton Bridge to Priddy's Hard



Priddy' Hard

(d) The Haslar Peninsula

2.15 The most southerly part of the waterfront is situated on the south side of Haslar Lake, but is connected by a single track road bridge across the creek. This affords good views northwards of the town's skyline. Commercial properties on the north bank have a very maritime character with their brightly coloured elevations.



Haslar Bridge



Haslar Lake

Except for the marina next to the bridge, the peninsula has an entirely historic military character dominated by Haslar Hospital. Its mid-18th Century classical formality, with its landmark façade and water tower, is enclosed by high red brick walls and narrow perimeter roads, like 'brick canyons'.



Haslar skyline facing west



Haslar Road - walls

Connected by a narrow spit is Fort Blockhouse at the most northerly point, which was effectively the first line of defence on this western side of Portsmouth Harbour. The landmark submarine escape training tower (SETT) is close by. The peninsula is also the location of the outstanding Victorian Gunboat Yard, and the former Admiralty Experimental Works (now Qinetiq), where the design of naval ships has been influenced by testing in ship model testing tanks from the late Victorian period to the present day. The whole complex has a unique and contained character and is largely a designated conservation area. On Dolphin Way at the southern tip of the complex, between the sea and Fort Road, the Haslar Immigration Removal Centre occupies a further enclosed site.



Fort Blockhouse – SETT



Harbour entry

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.16 The key features which define the town centre and the waterfront are as follows:-

- The High Street representing the spine of the old town grid plan and defining the town centre by its concentration of building height and maintenance of close alignment to the street form and remaining historic buildings;
- The Waterfront and 'The Esplanade' presenting both the historic and 'modern' Gosport with its environmental enhancements, building conversions and uses and views across the marinas to the Portsmouth skyline;
- The historic defence sites such as Fort Blockhouse, the ramparts and Priddy's Hard;
- Landmark historic conversions in the streetscene such as St George Barracks North and South and the Royal Clarence Yard complex;
- The 1960s housing development south of High Street, forming a setting to the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Campanile, together with the landmark twin towers on the waterfront;
- The historic Haslar Peninsula with its landmark tower, boiler house chimneys, high boundary walls, outlying defences and the formal classical layout of the military hospital site;
- The noted landmark value of the SETT Tower (Submarine Escape Training Tower close to Fort Blockhouse), the Gunboat Sheds and Ship Testing Tanks;
- St George Playing Fields, Walpole Park, and the open land beyond the old ramparts provide attractive public green spaces on the west and south sides of the town centre, defining the distinction between the old town and the 'new town' beyond;
- The wide views of the town centre skyline from the south side of Haslar Lake.

Opportunities

- 2.17 There are opportunities for opening up those parts of the waterfront which are still closed off to the public adjacent to the town centre, as well as to regenerate some of the old industrial sites along the waterfront. Recent redevelopment has sought to increase the scale and height along the waterfront quite successfully and this with care could be extended. Approaching the town centre from the north on the A32 the road loops around the High Street and there is a feeling driving through that one could miss the centre if the pedestrian crossing failed to stop you. Even viewing this area from the jetty to the south or from the other side of the harbour, there is nothing to in particular to distinguish it, save the residential towers. The new ferry terminus is a low, neat and modern structure suited for its context. There is thus both an opportunity to identify an entry point (or gateway) and make a statement at the east end of the High Street, as well as connect it more positively with the Harbour side - whilst protecting the public open spaces such as Falkland Gardens.
- 2.18 Some of the open spaces south of South Street up to Haslar Lake lack definition and could benefit from a closer look at their role and applied landscape design, including the use of appropriate trees to shape spaces and frame views and perhaps reinforce the link between the impressive surviving remains of the ramparts by, for example, a series of linked paths and interpretation panels. Opportunities should be taken to reinforce the connections between the waterfront and the town centre and open-up sites for the public to gain increased access to the waterfront. How the layout of the town historically developed could be used to reinforce the special sense of place that is unique to Gosport.

Area 2: Older Urban Core

Survey

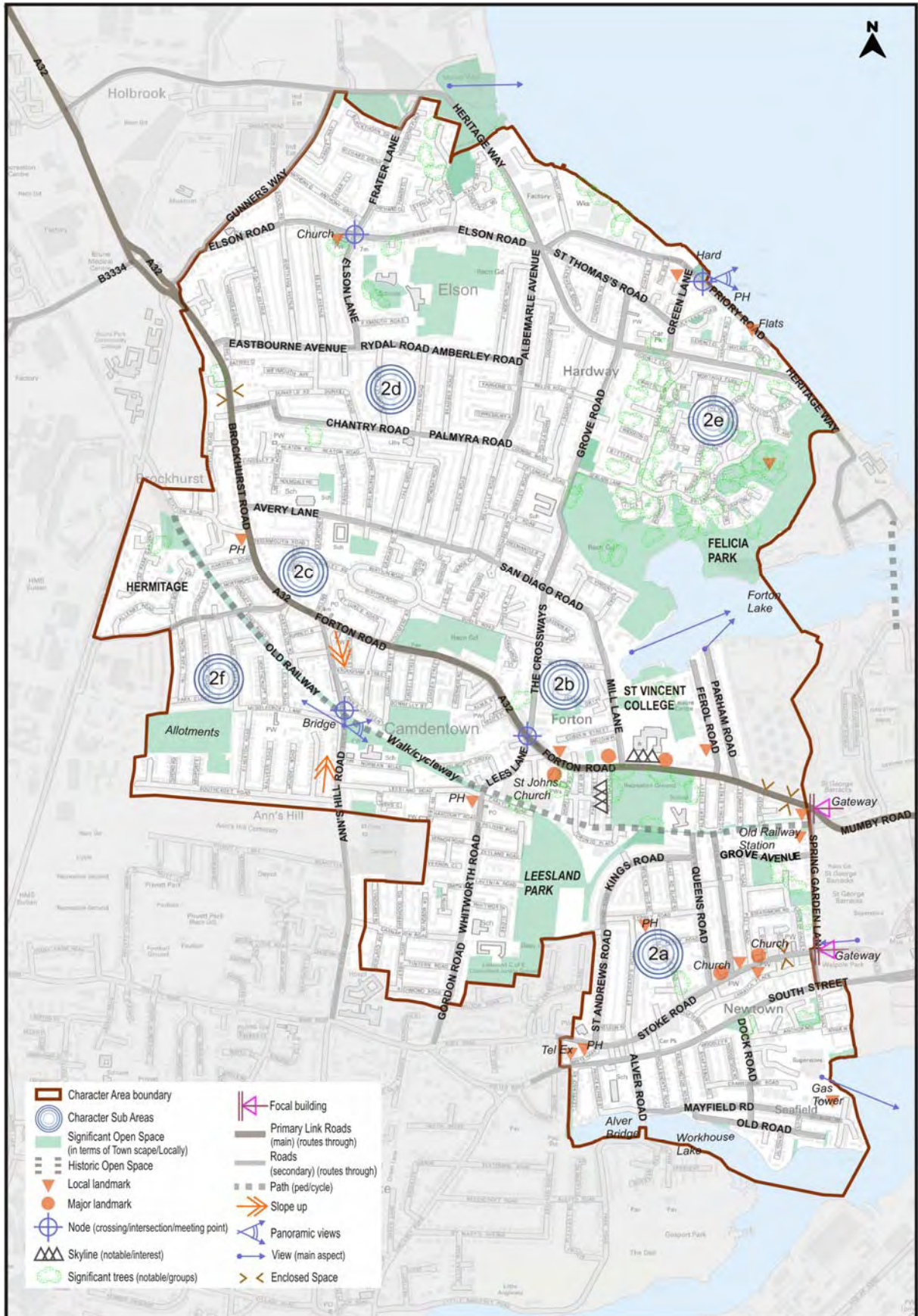
- 2.19 Location and Setting: This area lies immediately west and extends north and of the old town and follows the main road north (A32) extending as far as Fort Brockhurst, bounded by the line of the old railway on its western edge and the shoreline of Portsmouth Harbour to the east. It includes the districts of Newtown, Forton, Camdentown, Brockhurst, Hardway and Elson and lies on the level coastal plain which has very subtle undulations.
- 2.20 Historic Context: Forton has early origins relating to its proximity to the creek (Forton Lake) and a large hospital and prison, originating in the late 17th Century. In the 18th Century, outside of the fortified old town and Priddy's Hard, the area was mostly farmland with the small settlements of Forton, Brockhurst, Elson and Hardway, to the north and Alverstoke and Bury Cross to the west. By the early 19th Century commercial and residential development had spread beyond the fortified old town westwards along the old medieval route of Stoke Road. By the early 1830s, the villages of Forton and Brockhurst were expanding clustered around the main north-south route, and Forton had effectively become a suburb of the town centre linked by intermediate development: including the huge Marine's Barracks site (now St Vincent's College), an

old established boatyard and rope works north of the present A32. Similarly Elson and Hardway (with its waterside activities on the Harbour side) were expanding. The area only began to be seriously developed after the 1840s with the expansion of a number of military sites and development of the Palmerston Forts. The area continued to expand from the old core settlements throughout the 19th Century, and post-war housing has in-filled much of the remaining land between and beyond this older core, including an inter-war area to the west of the A32 and the Ann's Hill junction. Extensive modern housing development has taken place since the 1980s up until the present day: notably at the Priddy's Hard estates.

Form

- 2.21 The character area may be sub-divided into six main townscape sub-areas. These are Stoke Road and environs, Forton, Camdentown/Brockhurst Road, Elson and Hardway, Priddy's Hard estates and Hermitage (see Plan 4).

Plan 4 Older Urban Core



a) Stoke Road and Environs

2.22 Heading west from the old town and High Street, along the avenue of trees through Walpole Park, one enters the nearby shopping street of Stoke Road, between the 'visual gateway' of three storey buildings at the junction with Spring Garden Lane. A strong linear - mostly early to mid 19th Century character - of mixed shops and diverse commercial uses in two to four storey buildings, line both sides of the street. The street has a slight curve and is punctuated by the fine spire of the Edwardian Methodist Church, the large office block of Cray House and the Parish Church of Christchurch.



Stokes Road – approach

Methodist Church spire

The mix of buildings of varying ages and uses include cafes, pubs, independent retailers and offices. Notable buildings on this fairly narrow highway include the former Royal Arms public house with its fine Edwardian canopy, and the 1930s Portland Building. It is an interesting and varied streetscene up to its junction with Foster Road. Some much larger blocks of retail and modern flats occur towards the western end of the street, including the three- storey brick Marina Buildings on the northside. At the west end of the street, the open, splayed frontage of the White Hart dominates the streetscene, with the small but notable Nicholson Hall opposite with its copper bellcote. The end of the street is terminated abruptly at its junction with Bury Road, by the rectilinear bulk of the telephone exchange. The Stoke Road and Peel Road Conservation Area Appraisals provide much more detail on the built form and historic development of the area.



Portland Buildings

Stoke Road – west end

2.23 Behind the shops, particularly on the northside, can be seen the original Victorian grid of residential roads (such as Queens Road, Avenue Road and Sydney Road). There are some areas of notable quality, including the classical style terrace houses in Peel Road and No2 Queens Road with its cast iron veranda.



19th Century streets



Peel Road

Otherwise, this is a typical Victorian and Edwardian suburb of two storey terraces and semi-detached properties in small plots with small front gardens (although some terrace streets front hard up to the pavement) and narrow rear gardens - with the local pub, The Eagle on the corner of Elmhurst Road. At the northeast corner is an area of mostly inter-war suburban housing centred on a pleasant small public garden 'The Grove', which was previously part of the Grove Estate. The linear character of Spring Garden Lane with its large villas forms a strong eastern boundary to the area fronting the green expanse of St. George Playing Fields.



Grove Road



Spring Garden Lane

2.24 South Street, which cut through the area in the early 1970s, is effectively a barrier that split a large area of 19th century housing in two. To the south is a mixture of modern housing, 19th Century terraces, inter-war semi-detached housing of varying dates all enclosed by Workhouse Lake to the South.



South Street



Dock Road area

There are also flats, industrial units, a supermarket and a bright blue gas storage tank : all adding to the area's varied character. The mix of modern building types, styles and materials giving no particular unity, with relatively little green space or trees, although some properties do face the water. The limited open space is virtually confined to a narrow strip with a children's playground adjacent to the waterfront in Old Road. To the south across the creek, linked by a concrete bridge (Alver Bridge) is the historic locality of Gosport's 19th Century workhouse, now an area of late 20th Century housing.



Shoreline to Haslar Lake



Workhouse Lake to Alver Bridge

(b) Forton

2.25 The area is very much tied to Forton Road (A32) as it leaves the old town northwards. The former Railway Inn, at the junction with Spring Garden Lane, acts like a gateway. This is reinforced by the proximity of the old railway station which has been restored as part of an enlightened modern housing scheme. The streetscape thereafter is a diverse mix of mostly mid-19th Century small shops and houses with some modern infill, including three storey flats either side of Parham Road (opposite The Five Alls public house with its traditional green glazed tiles). Ferrol Road includes two rows of distinctive timber clad houses of the mid-19th century.



'Gateway' to Forton



Forton Road

The impressive front range of the former Forton Barracks (St Vincent's College) with its cupola forms an impressive landmark. Opposite is Forton Field, once part of the military site and now an important open space within the Forton Conservation Area. A row of late 19th Century houses with prominent gables and tall chimney stacks pierce the skyline at the north-west corner of the park.



St Vincent's College



Forton Field

2.26 Approaching The Crossways junction the scale of the street increases and another landmark, the Church of St John the Evangelist, with its spire (fleche) atop its dominant roof, and some modern tall blocks of flats on the north side of the road, dominate the streetscene. Forton Lake once enclosed the north side of the current A32 from Forton to Ann's Hill, and the modern development in this area is in many places developed over the creek. It now ends to the rear of St Vincent's College and from this point provides notable views back towards the Millennium Bridge.



St John's Church



Forton Lake looking west

The core of the historic settlement of Forton was once focused on the 18th Century Trafalgar public house and nearby prison (now a large and important archaeological site). The shops still focus in this area but have also spread to the larger modern units to the north. Recent landscaping improvements are helping to re-establish the focus on this area.



Ferrol Road



The Crossways

2.27 South of Forton Road between St Vincent's Fields and up to Ann's Hill Road and southwards to the cemetery, the tight Victorian road layout along most of Whitworth Road and Gordon Road is also an extension of this older urban core. Much of this area, known as Leesland, has a strong sense of community with a mix of corner shops, pubs, a large park and school. Heading south along Lees Lane from the junction with The Crossways, the road rises towards the line of the old railway with the Sanderson Centre on the left. One's view then focuses on the three storey form of the Grade II Listed Railway Tavern, dominating the next corner at Leesland Road. This is a fine example of a Victorian railway pub. Further south is another prominent public house (Gypsy Queen) on the corner with Carnarvon Road.



Small Victorian terraced streets



Junction Tavern

(c) Camdentown/Brockhurst Road

2.28 To the west, beyond the core of Forton, the scale of development lessens and becomes more residential. This applies to the streets off the A32 where a similar character continues.



Recreation Ground – formerly part of the creek



Camdentown

Forton Road becomes Brockhurst Road after the Ann's Hill junction and meanders through the largely later 19th Century character of the area. This includes a mix of retail and housing, constrained on the west side by the old railway line, now a green footpath/cycle way. The streetscape has a more defined sense of enclosure as one goes northwards along Brockhurst Road, due to the linear nature and increased scale of the buildings and a higher density on some larger plots with three storey houses set back with front gardens and boundary walls. This was the core of the historic settlement of Brockhurst. A number of the former Brickwood or Blake's public houses, with their glazed tile frontages, have since declined and have largely changed to residential use: although the larger Queen's Head at the corner of Station Road, is a notable exception, as well as a local landmark. There are some 18th and early 19th Century houses of note at the northern end, although many have gone through various changes over the years. Also there are some notable trees on the west side around the junction with Captain's Close. Nearly the whole of the backland on the western side north of Station Road is given over to allotments.



Brockhurst Road



The Queen's Head

(d) Elson and Hardway

2.29 To the east of Brockhurst Road is a large, medium density, residential suburb forming an extensive grid pattern layout of inter-war housing: much of which is in formal long straight roads. It is only the limitations of the narrow road space of the original layout that is now straining against the pressure of the motor car usage. Post-war development has filled in much of the remaining land between the long main routes of Avery Lane, Albermarle Avenue, Melvill Road, Grove Road and The Crossways.



Elson inter-war suburbs



House styles of various dates

Post-war development is more informal in layout. It is difficult to clearly identify the older settlement of Elson now subsumed by later development, although a scattering of

older buildings can be spotted on Elson Road and into Ham Lane. A current focus is Church of St Thomas the Apostle, with its dominant grey stone form.



San Diego crossroads



Elson Church and crossroads

2.30 Along Priory Road, the old centre of Hardway still has some historic 18th and 19th Century buildings. Historically this was a busy working area with a number of slipways or 'hards' and is most famous for the use of the area as a major D-Day embarkation point. The protection of the Conservation Area and features related to this major event will help to retain the areas special interest and sense of place. A little further along, the Jolly Roger public house with its frontage position enjoys an attractive aspect across the Harbour. There are some marina facilities along the waterside, together with an employment area with typical industrial sheds in Quay Lane. Although there are some large private gardens, except for the Forton and Elson Recreation grounds most open green space is confined to school facilities and some allotments. The new link road, Heritage Way, sweeps through the area from the north east providing a direct connection from the A32 at Fort Brockhurst to Priddy's Hard.



Priory Road



The Hardway frontage

(e) Priddy's Hard Estates

2.31 This 'modern' waterside suburb has developed since the 1990s across former Ministry of Defence land. It consists of detached houses and short terraces arranged in small to medium plots around closes, with small rear gardens or communal greens. The curving closes to the east contrast with the more regimented lines of the terraces on the west side. A range of scale from modest two storey houses to three storey town houses and some larger 'executive-style' houses, in diverse styles and materials cross the area. Roofs are mostly interlocking concrete tile and artificial slate with some clay tiles. Open land runs alongside Forton Creek and separates the housing from the historic core of Priddy's Hard. More formal open space has been landscaped along the harbour side.



Heritage Way



Priddy's Hard estates

(f) Hermitage

2.32 Overall this is a more recent residential suburb, tucked in behind earlier development on the south side of Brockhurst Road. Centred on Cambridge Road, the district has a tight grid network of some 19th Century and inter-war streets to the southside. It consists of two storey terraces and some distinctive semi-detached houses set on small plots, with small front and rear gardens backing onto one another. It is characterised by red/buff brick construction with painted render, bays to terraces with tile hanging and clay tile roofs. There are also several roads of inter-war bungalows at the southern end abutting the cemetery. On the northside of Cambridge Road, the modern estate is developed in a loop and series of culs-de-sac. There are few open green spaces, apart from the large allotment area to the west and a woodland copse which lies in the northwest corner close to the former railway line. A cycle/pathway forms a green corridor through the district.



Cambridge Road



Hermitage housing

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.33 The key features which define the qualities of the older urban areas (see Plan 4) are as follows:-

- The linear character of Stoke Road, with its core series of 19th Century buildings of two to four storeys, giving a good sense of enclosure to this shopping street, punctuated by the landmark of Christchurch with its tower and spire;
- The 19th Century residential suburbs of Newtown and Grove to north and south of Stoke Road, with its regular street grid and range of terraces, semi-detached and

large villas in the northern part and smaller scale of terraces adjacent to Haslar Lake and Workhouse Lake;

- The 'gateway' form of the old pub buildings at the junction of Forton Road and Spring Garden Lane and the adjacent restoration of the old railway station building;
- The important focal point and commercial heart of Forton, focused around the Trafalgar Public House and the shopping area to its north, west and east;
- The landmark front range of St Vincent's College and the notable green space opposite;
- The landmark scale of the red brick church of St John the Evangelist, which marks the approach to the local centre from the east;
- The historic area around Ferrol Road and the boat builder's houses;
- The narrow linear and mixed use character of Brockhurst Road with its higher density and larger scale residential plots and notable public houses, such as the Queen's Head;
- The Church of St Thomas which defines the remnants of the historic settlement and is a notable landmark;
- The extensive area of interwar housing covering large parts of Elson, having a largely formal layout and consistent scale.
- The historic core of Hardway and its waterfront area;
- The notable green open spaces of Forton Field, Leesland Park, Forton and Elson Recreation Grounds, alongside Forton Lake and enclosing the historic core of Priddy's Hard.
- Forton Lake with its distinctive setting and wide panoramic views.

Opportunities

2.34 This is a large and diverse part of the Borough and contains the structural parts of the old settlements, which followed the main routes to the north and west of the old town. Although the underlying features and form of these are still apparent, post-war changes to retailing, commercial advertising, the use of modern materials and components such as roofs, window styles and shopfronts have affected the original character. But these are issues that do not just apply to Gosport. Many of the differing residential areas have a particular character and style, which should be respected when considering any changes or improvements if their identity is not to be lost. Adoption of appropriate design guidance for new development, supported by co-ordinated street furniture, street lighting, quality paving materials applied consistently to works in the public realm always helps to define a sense of place or a route, as well as its buildings. This should be applied particularly to the A32 corridor. The A32 is the major route to and from Gosport and consideration should be given to the opportunity to promote and enhance the special interest of key settlement 'nodes' along the route and thus the importance of these as 'places' and points of interest or markers en-route to the town centre. For example, in Forton, retaining key historic buildings and ensuring that any new development within their context enhances their sense of place will help to re-establish the unique character of the area.

Area 3: Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett

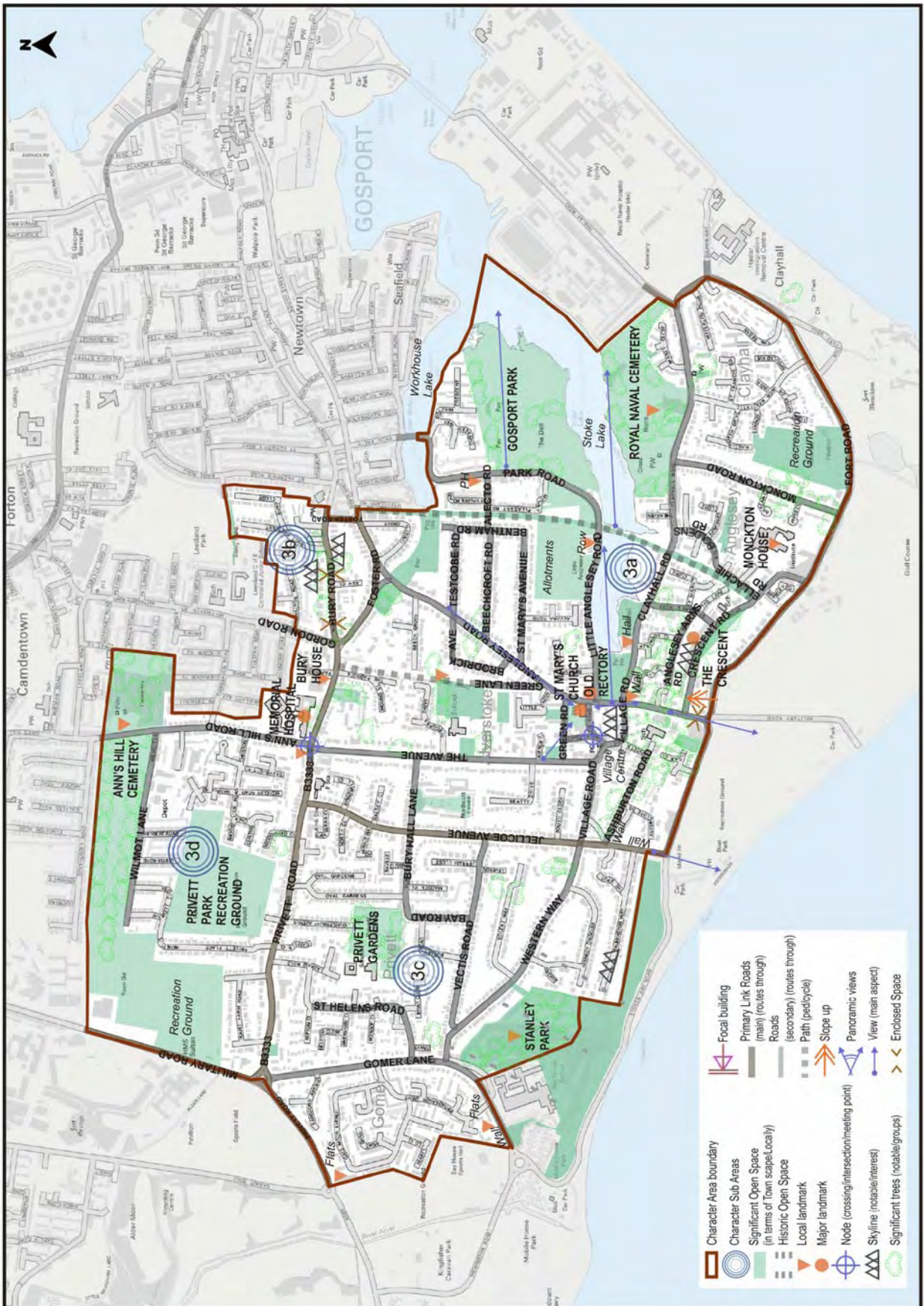
Survey

- 2.35 Location and Setting: This area is situated more to the south west of Gosport centre, covering a large area from Clayhall in the south east, to Ann's Hill Cemetery in the north west. Key historic settlements include Alverstoke, Anglesey and Bury Cross.
- 2.36 Historical Context: Originally called Stoke, Alverstoke is one of the earliest settlements on the peninsular. By the 18th Century, outside of the fortified town of Gosport, the village was the main settlement. The adjacent settlement of Anglesey (named after its benefactor the Marquis of Anglesey) was developed in the early 19th Century. The settlement remained incomplete but later infill has largely been very sympathetic to the outstanding core of Listed Buildings and grand sweep of The Crescent. The 19th Century saw residential development and commerce grow outside the old town along the main medieval route of Stoke Road, in the form of Newtown and gradually extending westwards to include the ancient hamlet of Bury Cross and into Privett. Both of these areas had been dominated by larger rural estates. Additionally, a railway branch line was extended to Stokes Bay and the urban expansion intensified, with the smaller settlements and villages gradually merging by the beginnings of the 20th Century. In the inter-war period, together with development along the main routes to the west and north, an area of medium and higher density residential housing was developed at Clayhall around a late 18th Century settlement that appeared following the development of Haslar Hospital. The large suburban areas of Privett and the southern part of Ann's Hill were developed in the post-war period.

Form

- 2.37 The character area has been sub-divided into four broad sub-areas. These are a) Alverstoke, Anglesey and Clayhall, b) Bury Road, c) Privett and Gomer, and d) Privett Park and Ann's Hill (see Plan 5).

Plan 5 Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett



(a) Alverstoke, Anglesey and Clayhall

2.38 The core of Alverstoke is still defined by its medieval layout, with its enclosed, narrow lanes and spaces. Its buildings are decidedly 18th and 19th Century in character. This combines to give it an almost unique ‘village character’ within its urban surroundings. The Parish Church of St Mary’s and its churchyard form an impressive landmark.



Alverstoke village



St Mary's - landmark

The nearby Anglesey to the southeast, is mostly Regency style in character, on a more planned layout and centred on The Crescent and Crescent Gardens. More modern low rise development continues south from Anglesey and Alverstoke to the back of Stokes Bay, where individual houses face the sun with many roofs displaying the growth in rows of ‘solar’ panels, thus adding a new townscape feature. There are a few lengths of high walls which stand out as notable landscape and historic features: notably the high brick enclosure at the corner of Clayhall Road, and another in Ashburton Road which links to a stone wall at the southern end of Jellicoe Avenue.



Crescent Road variety



High walls – Clayhall Road

2.39 To the north of the ‘village’ the pockets of older buildings particularly later Victorian and Edwardian villas have gradually been surrounded by substantial inter-war and post war, single and semi-detached houses. All are on individual plots throughout the area fronting their wide, long straight roads: such as Anglesey Road (with its attractive tree-lined character) and The Avenue. The regular plots, large mature gardens, front boundary walls, hedges and good tree groups are still notable features. Traditional materials such as red brick, render, pebbledash, clay tiles and slate roofs are still commonplace. Although almost entirely consisting of individual family dwellings, there are some conversions to flats as well as new flats. The northern edge of the area is defined by the line of Foster Road and the adjacent small park.



Anglesey Road



Foster Road junction

- 2.40 This contrasts with the grid pattern of the smaller roads and higher densities to the east from Bentham Road and on the other side of the old railway line on the promontory. It is mostly Victorian housing that extends up to the end of the creek and facing Gosport Park, with a notable pub as a local landmark. This contrasts with the post-war redevelopment on the old workhouse site on the north boundary of the park, which retains a footpath around it. Gosport Park is a large green open space extending between Stoke Lake and Haslar Lake and affords varied tidal views across the creeks with long views towards Fort Blockhouse and the Portsmouth's skyline beyond. The concrete road bridge connects across Workhouse Lake to the Dock Village area.



Gosport Park



Haslar from Stokes Lake

- 2.41 East of Anglesey, beyond the beautifully landscaped military cemetery, is Clayhall. This has a core of 19th Century buildings, mostly in a terraced form, surrounded by more recent and more typical suburban development. The post-war development centred on the north-south spine of Gilkicker Road is varied in layout with staggered and off-set building lines and curved feeder roads. Many of the two storey houses are on regular plots with a mix of detached, semi-detached buildings and short terraces, together with some isolated low-rise flats. On the northside of Clayhall Road is the notable red brick Broderick Memorial Hall set in the semi-rural setting of Stoke Lake. The area extends eastwards to a frontage along Fort Road.



Clayhall Road



Little Anglesey

2.42 Stanley Park, once the private grounds to the Alverbank, is an attractive and important historic park. The Alverbank Hotel, and Bay House (now a large secondary school), are enclosed by important open spaces and notable mature landscaping. The boundary wall to Bay House is a landmark feature when the school is approached from the north or west, and mature trees now largely screen the two Regency buildings from the south, following the original course of the River Alver before it was diverted in the mid-19th Century. Besides 'the village' churchyard, to the east it is the spaces and views around the head of the creek such as around Little Anglesey Road, which provide many attractive aspects. On a calm day the setting of Stoke Lake has the effect of a 'visual oasis'. The open landscape views along the creek from Jackie Spencer Bridge westward are especially notable, with the church as the backdrop. Protecting this open setting is key to retaining the special character of the village and its historic setting at the head of the creek. The long straight north-south foot/cycle way which crosses the water here is an attractive green corridor through the area.



Stanley Park



Alverbank Hotel

(b) Bury Road

2.43 This sub-area is centred on the main east-west route of Bury Road up to its cross-roads junction with Privett Road, Ann's Hill Road and The Avenue. Older development follows the main routes, marked particularly by the corner buildings at Bury Cross adjacent to the War Memorial Hospital site and then north along the route of Ann's Hill Road.



Bury Cross



Privett Road

At the east end of Bury Road, the 'island' street block formed with Foster Road (now a traffic gyratory) forms an impressive piece of townscape with its larger scale, three storey 19th Century houses and modern flats. These give a sense of enclosure to the streetscene reinforced by boundary walls and street-side trees. The northside of Bury Road includes some fine Regency houses set back behind high boundary walls and which are relatively secluded from the frontage. There is a small 'sunken' public garden on the southside of Foster Road.



Bury Road east



Foster Road elevations

Just to the west of the Ann's Hill junction, the fire station's practice tower is noticed. Thereafter along Privett Road, mostly inter-war ribbon development aligns this route with later development nearer the roundabout.

(c) Privett and Gomer

- 2.44 This sub-area includes Privett Gardens to the west of The Avenue, as far as the locality of Gomer. South of Privett Road, the area consists mainly of pleasant inter-war and post-war residential suburbs of two-storey detached and semi-detached houses either side of the two main east west roads - Western Way and Vectis Road. Some are on generous plots, with front and rear gardens on consistent building lines. There are even thatched inter-war houses in Western Way. The higher density, mostly pleasant semi-detached housing (for example Oval Gardens) is located between the main road and the parallel Bury Hall Road. This area also has two areas of public open green space – Norwood Close and Privett Gardens. The open space around the sheltered housing in Northcott Close is notable for its green tranquil character and fine trees. This was once the heart of the original Bury Hall Estate.



Privett



Western way

2.45 The development pattern tightens and density rises in the south west corner in Gomer, although the curving Gomer Lane itself is quite wide with grass verges. It has a varied array of 'modern' housing layouts and range of styles, from former brick municipal housing to town houses with boarding cladding reminiscent of a marine style.



Gomer Lane



Gomer styles

The locality is mostly traditional red brick, but also buff and brown with a mixture of traditional and modern materials on roofs. At the western end, opposite the imposing stone wall of the Bay House School the environment is more open, with their playing fields and beyond the wide aspect of HMS Sultan's open spaces. There is a mobile home park adjacent to the Browndown Camp. A development of relatively modern blocks of 4 storey flats with shallow pyramidal roofs marks the approach to the district from the west along Privett Road.



Row houses and flats



Privett Road flats

(d) Privett Park and Ann's Hill

2.46 On the north side of Privett Road, behind the residential frontage, lies the green open space and sports facilities of Privett Park. Beyond this the large suburb of Ann's Hill extends northwards to Forton Road. The older development follows the main Ann's Hill Road, with modern estates infilling the backland areas on the west side.



Privett Park

Ann's Hill Cemetery - walls and trees

Ann's Hill Cemetery lies on both sides of the main road as a notable landscape feature with its entrance building and gateways. This marks the extent of the character area together with the road rising over the large sweep of the modern concrete railway bridge. This 1930s bridge with echoes of Art-Deco brick details, gives extensive views for the pedestrian over the immediate urban surroundings and further long views beyond to Portsdown Hill to the north.



Ann's Hill Road

Ann's Hill bridge

2.47 Although the density of housing is quite high either side of Ann's Hill Road, there is a large amount of open space with the cemetery, the nearby Leesland Park and allotments to the north east corner. On the west side, Privett Park occupies approximately a quarter of the land area of this residential locality.

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.48 The key features which define the special qualities of Anglesey, Alverstoke and Privett are as follows (see Plan 5):-

- The historic village centre of Alverstoke with its tight Medieval layout, overlaid by 18th and 19th Century development and its landmark church of St Mary's;

- The Regency layout of Anglesey, with its regular plots, imposing villas, large gardens, boundary walls and its focal point development - The Crescent;
- Larger historic properties overlooking Stokes Bay, such as Alverbank House and Bay House set in large grounds;
- The environs of the Avenue and Anglesey Road with their spacious layout, generous plots, and mature gardens;
- The large residential area of Clayhall, whose earlier 19th Century beginnings have been overlaid with mostly post-war and later 20th Century medium to high density development;
- Bury Cross with the adjacent group of buildings including the Memorial Hospital and Bury House;
- Semi-detached and detached inter-war and later suburbs centred on Privett Gardens and either side of Western Way with its generous plots, mature garden trees and street trees;
- The later 20th Century suburb of Gomer consisting of curving avenues, closes and culs-de-sac with a variety of house type and some flats forming the edge to the military open spaces;
- The historic north-south route of Ann's Hill, with its older development and inter-war development clustered along it and with large post-war and modern residential suburbs behind to the west;
- The prominent series of open spaces, in particular – Gosport Park, Stanley Park, Privett Gardens, Privett Park and Ann's Hill Cemetery.
- The long views eastwards from the open space of Gosport Park across the creeks towards Haslar and the Portsmouth skyline.
- The intrinsic character of the historic Creeks and their immediate surroundings.

Opportunities

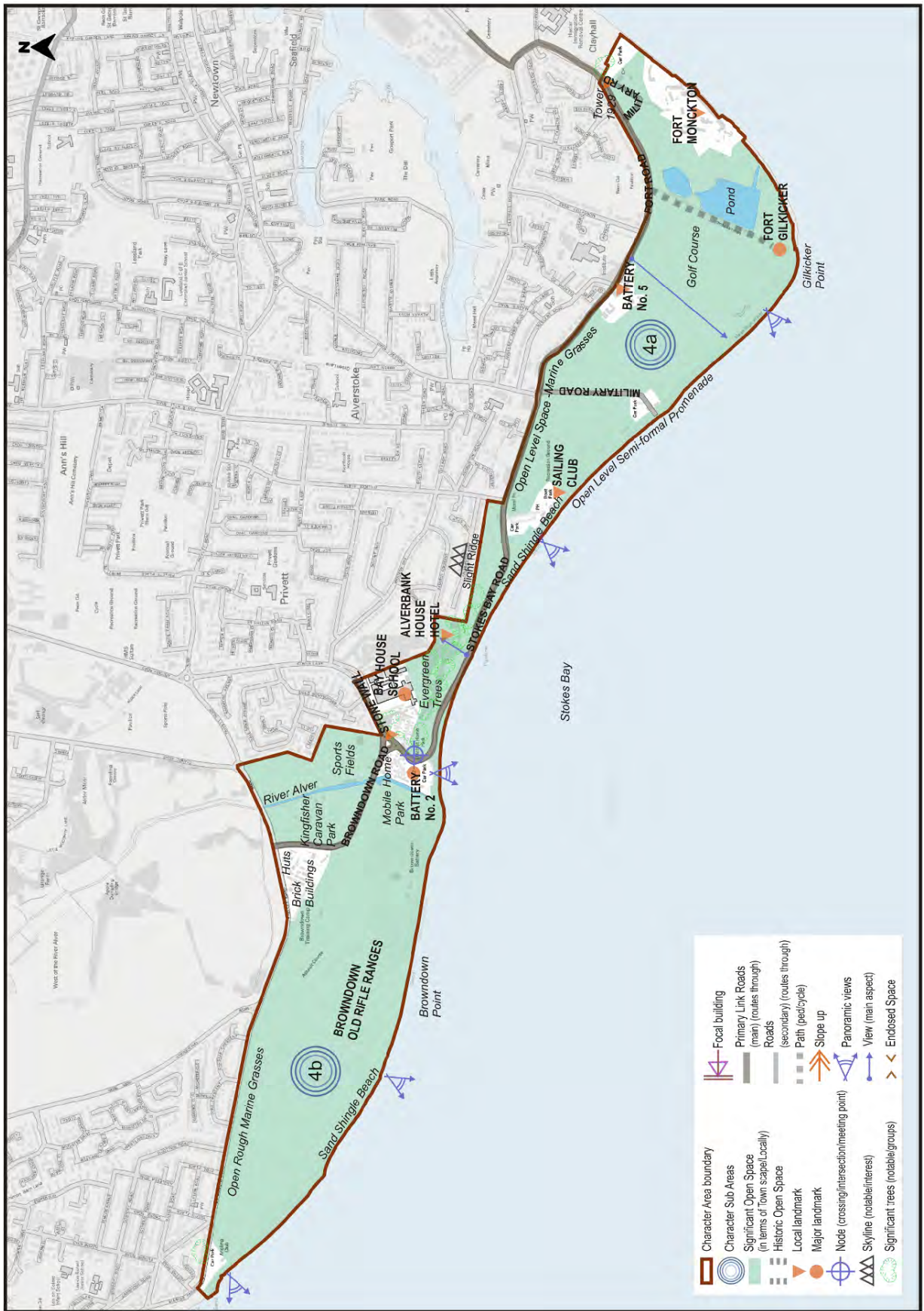
2.49 The area is generally well served by public open spaces and tree cover, including private gardens, particularly in Alverstoke, Anglesey and Privett, although there are less trees in some of the narrower older streets in the Ann's Hill area and the special character of all the key settlements need protecting. It will be important to resist the subdivision of larger plots. There is also the need to resist any higher scale development backing onto Stokes Bay. The present two storey skyline of Palmerston Way needs to be protected as a key aspect of the setting of Stokes Bay, as do the larger and older properties fronting Fort Road. There is a clear need to protect and enhance the setting of the creeks and look for opportunities to enhance the conservation areas within this large area.

Area 4: Stokes Bay and Browndown

Survey

- 2.50 Location and setting: Browndown and Stokes Bay are located on the southern coast of the town facing the Solent (see Plan 6). Although very different in character – the former an open, natural convex coastal strip of land (known as Browndown Point) and the latter a natural concave shingle bay - the two areas are linked at the mouth of the River Alver and share a common role in the history of Gosport. The land form rises from the coastal plain behind it at Browndown and then on the east side of the river runs further back from the beach at Stokes Bay in the shape of a low ridge.

Plan 6 Stokes Bay and Browndown



2.51 **Historic context:** In the 18th Century this southern coastline, either side of the mouth of the river was still largely open undeveloped land, although some brick kilns appeared on what later became the site of Bay House School. Haselworth Castle appeared as part of Henry VIII's coastal defences on the future site of Fort Monckton, but fell into disrepair by the early 17th Century. Fort Monckton at the east end of Stokes Bay beyond Gilkicker Point was the first of the major defence projects to be built in the area in the late 18th Century, along with 7 small artillery redoubts along the ridgeline overlooking Stokes Bay (some evidence of these redoubts of c.1780 survive to this day). Below the ridgeline the area was largely marshland. Intensive military works took place after 1832 with the construction of a wide defensive moat close to Fort Monckton, and by the early 1860s the entire length of Stokes Bay, below the ridgeline, was turned into a series of linear moats and ramparts, interspersed with powerful artillery batteries and culminating on their eastern end with Fort Gilkicker. The historic significance of these defences, of which important sections survive, is evident in the number of statutory designations. The major embarkation of troops from Stokes Bay on D-Day and the construction of the Mulberry Harbours have additionally left their mark. The archaeological importance of Stokes Bay and Browndown, both for Neolithic activity, but more especially for this military legacy, is noted in the Heritage Environment Record. Browndown and Stokes Bay have been the location of military activity from the 18th Century, if not earlier, and important parts remain under MOD ownership to this day.

Form

2.52 Today, the defence lines are still recognisable in places behind the beach, with the 19th and now mostly 20th Century developed residential plots of Anglesey set back along the ridge line at the back of the open space. Overall the bay has a semi-natural appearance with the dark evergreen trees and vegetation forming a dramatic backdrop to the sweeping shape of the bay.



Old defence line



Stokes Bay

At the west end from the roundabout, the high stone wall extends from the gated entrance to Bay House and together with some tall Scots Pines forms the approach to the bay between two mobile home parks either side. The stone tower of the Grade II Listed Bay House can just be glimpsed through the trees from the beach.



West approach to Stokes Bay



Dark treeline

In general modern shoreline improvements have been well done and the area has become an attractive and popular spot for seaside recreation, with day trippers and sailing clubs. The spectacular sea views across the Solent and to the Isle of Wight are a particular feature of the place. Towards the east end around Gilkicker Point, the land mass increases and the levels rise while Stokes Bay Road continues to hug the urban edge up to Fort Road, with some substantial houses along the northside set amongst tall pines. A golf course occupies the eastern end of the bay.



The promenade



Stokes Bay Road - east

2.53 Battery No.2 still survives at the western access to the promenade, now used as a diving museum. Fort Gilkicker further along at the Point has recently received planning permission for conversion to residential use. This promises to be an inspired piece of design for this historic building, utilising the potential but maintaining its essential character.



Battery No 2



Browdown - east end beach

2.54 West of Battery No.2, the area at Browdown takes on a completely different character. The bay changes shape and starts to protrude into the sea. The landscape of this coastal strip comprises exposed open grassland with virtually no trees. A few red brick buildings, remain on the MoD estate, but overall the area has an attractive windswept and slightly barren appearance. Although there is public access to much of the area, military training and exercises still take place.



Browdown shoreline – west end



Browdown Camp

It is essentially an open marine landscape and any elements of townscape are limited to views of the adjoining area of Anglesey set behind Stokes Bay and at the western end of Browdown with the houses fronting Portsmouth Road.



River Alver



Browdown west - public open space

Key Townscape/Landscape Characteristics

2.55 The key features (see Plan 6) which define Browdown and Stokes Bay landscape qualities are as follows:-

- The contrast between the natural coastal landscape as formed by Browdown Point and the concave sweep of the low lying bay and beach, defined by a low ridge of previous revetments;
- The historic coastal fortifications (Fort Gilkicker, Fort Monckton, Battery No.2 and the defence line) which still remain and define the area's heritage;
- Expansive views across the Solent and to the Isle of Wight;
- Simple, modern sea defence promenades and recreational areas;
- The wilder, open landscape nature of Browdown, providing an important type of coastal habitat and contrasting between Stokes Bay and Lee-on-the-Solent.

Opportunities

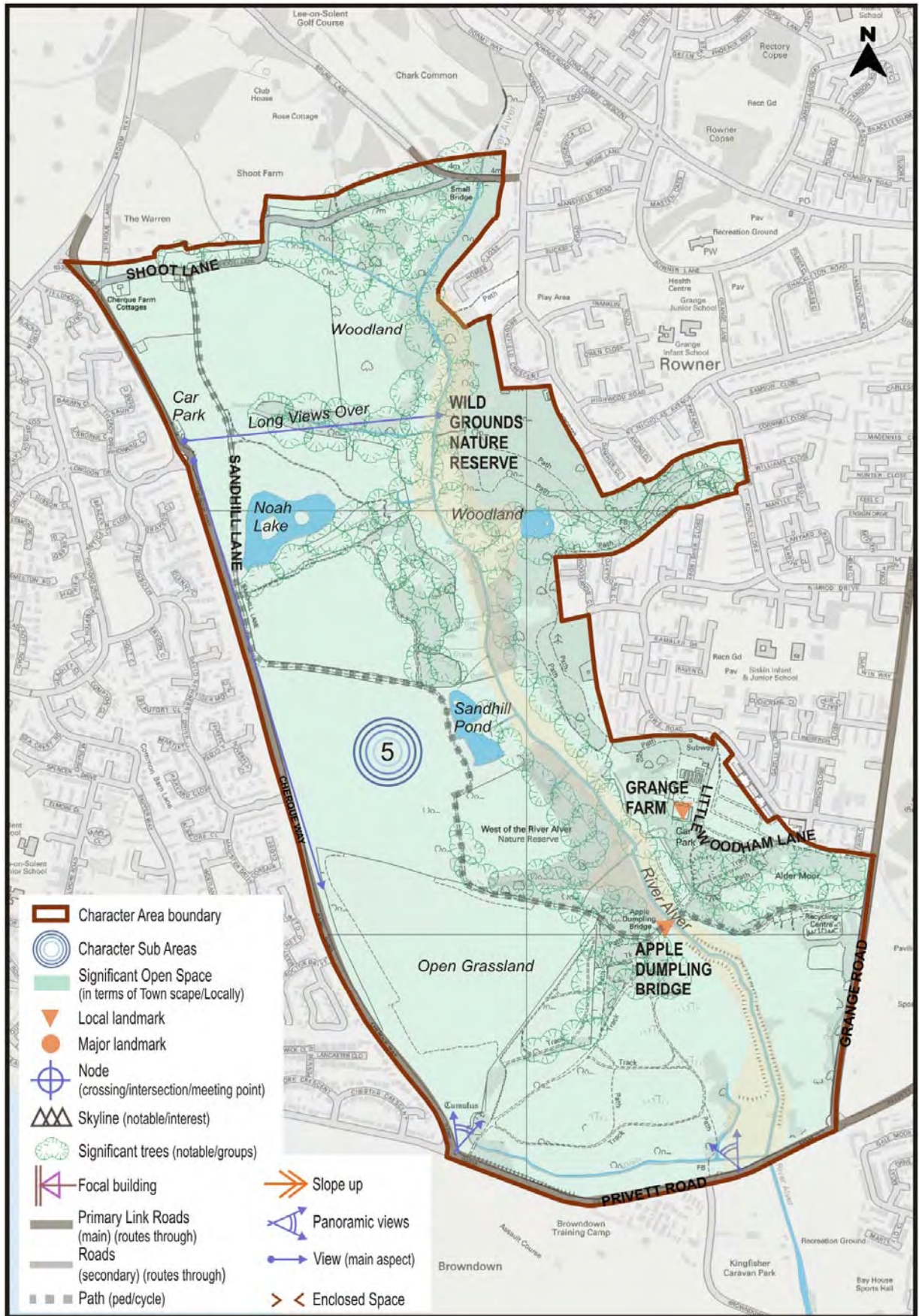
- 2.56 There are no foreseeable changes to Stokes Bay, other than continuing with some environmental improvements to local roads and amenities. The only part of the area that could potentially be subject to change would be the built part of Browndown, but this would need to take into account the sensitive nature both of its location and natural environment. The priority across the area should be to retain the high quality of the open landscape and minimise any built development. Opportunities to enhance the archaeological and historic interest of the area, and public amenities will need to be balanced against the need to manage and protect the natural habitat.

Area 5: The Alver Valley

Survey

- 2.57 Location and setting: The Alver Valley lies immediately to the west of Gosport's urban area running north-south following the course of the River Alver, connecting to the open coastal area of Browndown and to the river mouth at the western end of Stokes Bay. It provides a semi-rural gap of open landscape and woodland following the river on this western side of the town, separating it from the neighbouring coastal settlement of Lee-on-the-Solent. In the northwest the valley extends up to the boundary with Fareham on Broom Way, Rowner Road as well as the two residential areas of Rowner and Grange. Portsmouth Road forms the southern boundary of the area separating it from Browndown and Stokes Bay (see Plan 7).

Plan 7 Alver Valley



2.58 **Historic context:** The River Alver still follows in the main its historic course to the sea, although the last short section to the coast was the result of a change to its original course eastward along Stokes Bay: a change brought about by the extensive moated fortifications. The Alver Valley was and is a very strong north-south dividing line between Lee-on-the-Solent and Gosport. Although now having a strong countryside or parkland character, there is evidence to suggest that it was the scene of extensive human activity going back to Neolithic times both at the coastal entrance to the River Alver, but also in the vicinity of Apple Dumpling Bridge. There is also evidence for a long barrow and the supposed site of a motte and bailey (now a Scheduled Monument), although some early maps suggest that this might have been the site of a windmill. There is archaeological evidence for a Saxon settlement north east of Grange Farm, north of Howe Road, and possibly even Roman settlement. The Cistercians later established a farm (lay brothers grange) in the Alver Valley (now Grange Farm) and are probably responsible for an extensive series of what appear to be water meadows running through the Alver Valley. In the mid 19th Century the low lying marshy land of the Alver Valley was exploited to serve as a perfect natural defensive line, behind which to construct the Palmerston Forts to the east which survive on what is now the military establishment of HMS Sultan. The extensive flat land between the Alver Valley and the Forts was also exploited as the site of Grange Airfield, an important training and operational base during both world wars. The Valley also retains evidence of WW2 defences. An area in the northeast part of the valley was referred to as the Wild Grounds in the early part of the 19th Century and is now a Local Nature Reserve. There were and remain few buildings in the area.

Form

2.59 The Alver Valley today remains semi-rural in nature, forming a significant undeveloped gap between the town of Gosport and its western suburb of Lee-on-the-Solent. It is a landscape of open grassland, meadows, reed beds and woodland. The trees (mostly alder, silver birch, willow and oak together with hawthorn and holly) are smaller at the southern end, but increase in size the further north one goes.



Natural landscape at the valley's southern end



Northern treeline

There are several small lakes and ponds, the largest being Noah Lake and Sandhill, which forms the basis of a number of walking trails. Only Privett Road (B3333) crosses the

valley at the southern end. The eastern side of the river has more vegetation and the area becomes more wooded further north. In contrast, the western side is open rough grassland and when viewed from the west from the new link road (Cherque Way), the distant Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth can be seen.



West boundary to Cherque Farm



View to the east from Cherque Way

There are a couple of original small, hedge-lined lanes in the northern part – Brune Lane and Shoot Lane with a few scattered houses, a rest home, and a golf club. Currently, its main uses are recreational and nature conservation interests, with a number of walks through the valley area.



Shoot Lane



Nature Trails

Next to Grange Farm is the recreated 17th Century village which serves as an education experience for visitors and school children. Some of the larger ponds are used and managed for angling. The area contains a number of important habitats, as well as providing a 'natural corridor' northwards linking the coast and the remaining areas of open countryside south of Fareham.



Apple Dumpling Bridge



Open green spaces to the south east

2.60 There are two buildings in the Country Park of historic note. These are Grange Farm and Middle Barn Cottage: the former a Grade II Listed building and the latter on the local list of historic buildings of interest. The character of this country park is by its very nature essentially a landscape as opposed to a townscape. The valley provides a strong definition to the western boundaries of the main urban areas, connecting to the open coastal strip and linking to the open spatial character of the adjacent historic fort line at HMS Sultan. It is thus an important part of Gosport's special identity, and a rich area of natural, recreational and historic interest.



Grange Farm



New Alver Village abuts the east boundary

Key Landscape Characteristics

2.61 The key feature (see Plan 7) which define the Alver Valley's landscape qualities are as follows:-

- Semi-rural landscape 'corridor' which follows the River Alver, forming an important and strategic gap between the main town of Gosport and Lee-on-the-Solent;
- It connects at its southern end with the open coastal landscape strip of Browdown and the open space character of the historic fort line;
- Contrasting landscapes between the west side of the river and the east side,
- Landscape that provides some diverse habitat areas and supports important aspects of nature conservation, together with educational and open air recreational space and amenity;

- The potential interest in the possible medieval water meadows as a feature of historic importance;
- Grange Farm, the listed farmhouse and its historic and landscape setting.

Plan 8 Lee-on-the-Solent



Opportunities

- 2.62 The Alver Valley is identified within the Local Plan as ‘a regenerator’ for the creation of a Country Park and therefore is protected as a historical and recreational amenity space for the future. Part of its value is in its simplicity and natural character. However, due to the size of the area it may be possible to accommodate more formal forms of leisure activities in selective areas to the south east, without harming its special character. There is scope to enhance the area as a ‘Country Park’ integrating the variety of landscape forms that give the area its special character. There is potential for previously unknown prehistoric remains to be present. Finds of stone tools from the Valley certainly indicate more extensive occupation than is currently demonstrated by excavated archaeological sites.

Area 6: Lee-on-the-Solent

Survey

- 2.63 Location and setting: Lee-on-the-Solent is a settlement located in the western most part of the Borough, separated from the suburbs of Gosport by the Alver Valley and Browndown on its east and southern boundaries. It is a compact urban area running broadly southeast to northwest along the flat coastal plain to neighbouring Stubbington and is defined firmly by its boundaries, including Daedalus airfield which forms its north boundary. The coastline undulates before dipping down to nearly sea level at the eastern end where it meets Browndown. The containment of the area and its edges are clearly defined from the three main approaches – from the west (Stubbington), the north (Fareham and Rowner) and from the south east (Browndown).
- 2.64 Historical context: The settlement is relatively young as prior to 1884 it was largely undeveloped, consisting of only scattered isolated properties, with a small core of buildings on Manor Way. In 1885 Mr. C.E. Newton Robertson purchased a large estate with the vision of developing a seaside resort for wealthy Victorians. Robertson’s plans included laying out a grid pattern of streets, marking plots and setting out Marine Parade East and West. Although the development of a village centre, parklands, promenades, a pier and some residential construction took place in the next twenty years, the plan was not a success. Although the L &SW Railway did run a branch line along the seafront from Gosport which terminated at a station building next to the pier head this also did not last long and was closed in the 1930s. Most development took place in the inter-war years, when the Victorian plots were incrementally in-filled. Lee’s character is most clearly defined by a mix of Victorian, Edwardian and interwar properties: the latter being dominant outside of the High Street/Manor Way core. A leisure complex with a landmark tower was completed in 1935 (Lee Tower, since demolished in 1971) and the Art Deco shops west of Pier Street are a strong reminder of the 1930s influence on the area. The extent of Marine Parade was recognised by the Borough Council as an Area of Special Character in 2007 and the central part centred on Pier Street was designated a conservation area. The respective SPD and Conservation Area Appraisal, provide much more detailed information on the special interest of the area. In the post-war period, suburban development has extended out from the

original Victorian layout and higher density blocks started to be developed along the seafront in the 1960s and 70s.

- 2.65 During the First World War, Lee was identified as a prime location for naval aviation facilities and the airfield site later known as HMS Daedalus was established. Due to the historical military importance of this site, a conservation area was designated in 1999, covering the historic core at the south east corner where it abuts Marine Parade. The Conservation Area Appraisal and a subsequent heritage study of Daedalus provide full details of the area's special interest. The site has been released by the MOD and is recognised as a site of major development potential. It is identified for employment-led mixed use development in the local plan and it has also been designated as an Enterprise Zone by the Government.

Form

- 2.66 Today, Lee-on-the-Solent overall has a varied character contrasting between the 1930s seafront image of Marine Parade, the original late-Victorian grid street pattern and the post-war development overlaying and extending outwards. Thus, within this picture there are four character 'sub-areas' that may be defined. These are: - a) Lee Seafront (Marine Parade), b) Lee suburbs, c) the Later Residential Estates and d) Daedalus (see Plan 8).

(a) Lee Seafront – Marine Parade

- 2.67 The development pattern of individual plots facing the Solent originates from the original 1885 plan. A number of the Victorian and Edwardian properties still exist along Marine Parade, but most date from the inter-war period 'modernised' with larger windows, balconies and verandas to take advantage of the views. There are also some post-war redevelopments of flats up to four and five storeys. Approaching the middle of the Parade towards Pier Street, with the parallel High Street shops behind, the building style includes examples of 'New Modernism' architecture typical of the late 1920s and 1930s.



Marine Parade west

Marine Parade centre

The shopping area is generally busy and popular as a local centre, with a number of cafes. The Conservation Area centres on the cross roads linking Pier Street, Manor Way

and the High Street. It includes the old brick railway station on the seaward side of Marine Parade, the Bun Penny (18th Century) and adjacent Le Breton Farmhouse (15th Century) in Manor Way, as well as Art Deco Buildings on Marine Parade.



High Street – east end



Pier Street crossing

2.68 There have been a number of recent redevelopments of flats and senior citizen apartments, some up to five storeys at the east side of the centre, which has changed the character of that area. The Marine Parade Area of Special Character, Supplementary Planning Document, of 2007 was produced to help guide and influence development along the seafront, with its aim being to help protect the predominant domestic scale of development in this sensitive area. The eastern side of Marine Parade begins to drop down in level in stages to where it meets the Portsmouth Road and a boat yard adjacent to the beach.



Frontage re-development



East side – change in level

2.69 The Marine Parade is an attractive linear route with the distinctive hoop-top lamp posts lining the seaward side, and a wide grass verge, which then drops down to a lower promenade walk next to the shingle beach. This open grassland was part of the Victorian plan for the settlement where two parks were formed west and east of the original pier.



Marine Parade west end frontage - domestic scale Wide verges at the east end

The landform is higher at the west end and the slipway, opposite the Daedalus entrance, making a distinctive dip in the road and cut-through of the land to the sea at this point. Marine Parade commands panoramic views across the Solent, which is dominated by the Isle of Wight, but also to the west with Fawley in the distance. In recent years, some environmental improvements have been made to the Parade and the lower promenade as it steps down to the shingle beach. Along with street lighting, the refurbishment of the old lido as a children's playground and nearby beach bistro, have helped enhance the general attractiveness.



Higher land form at the west end

Beach at the east end

(b) Lee Suburbs

2.70 This sub-area lies immediately behind the main sea frontage and incorporates the distinctive Victorian grid layout. Immediately beyond the main shopping street are long straight roads (for example Milvil Road and Swanage Road), with shorter intersecting roads (such as Bittern Road and Court Road). Many roads have grass verges. They provide mostly low density substantial plots with inter-war houses and later infill, all with mature gardens. Some notable remnants of the original late Victorian and Edwardian houses survive on corners or scattered around the estate. Although the area displays a mixed building character with a range of house types plot sizes are largely quite generous. The Church of St Faith in Victoria Square provides an attractive 'green setting' in the centre of the grid with some dramatic 'windswept' Scots pines. One striking feature is the long views down the straight roads – for example, Montserrat Road, High Street and Richmond Road.



Long grid roads



Victoria Square

2.71 In the eastern part of this sub-area the street layout remains, but plot sizes generally reduce. A higher density is evident in parts (for example on Gosport Road). A feature of these older, long straight roads, are the parallel back alleys that run the length of the properties.



Gosport Road



Back lanes

The very end block of Marine Parade where it meets Portsmouth Road drops down sharply in a dip before turning eastwards and rising into the old Portsmouth Road. Here the frontage is mostly 20th Century detached, two-storey housing facing the open expanse of Browdown, with two semi-circular side roads at the eastern end. This housing is eclectic in style, but is quite consistent in mass and height.



Portsmouth Road west end



Portsmouth Road frontage to Browdown

(c) Later Residential Estates

2.72 This sub-area includes the remainder of Lee, beyond the original 1885 layout, extending up to its northern boundary with the airfield and eastwards to a new link road which serves the most recent housing development along the length of this eastside – Cherque Farm. The change in date of the housing is marked in roads such as Russell Road, where the west side is early (pre-war) and the east side of the road, except for scattered early houses sees inter-war development and more modern infill northwards into Leamington Crescent and along the northern part of Manor Way. North of Elmore Close the development also changes to ‘modern’ housing development. The area consists of mixed, medium density traditional family housing dating from the 1960s and 70s and later further north. They are mostly detached and semi-detached in open plan layouts. There is a small, modern local centre on Twyford Drive.



Manor Way



Local centre – Twyford drive

The more recent Cherque Farm development by definition of its almost physical division, size, layout, building style and density (with two of its three main accesses from the east side), can virtually be classed as a ‘sub-area’ of its own.



Cherque Way



Cherque Farm housing

2.73 The residential area is thus made up of a number of different estates, built over the last forty or more years and is a pleasant and popular location. Towards the southern end, enclosed by housing development, is a large playing field adjacent to the two schools and a community centre. The access to the schools is extremely restricted due to the narrow roads and proximity of housing development surrounding them.

(d) Daedalus Conservation Area

2.74 Although strictly part of the airfield, this area ‘protrudes’ into the northern end of the settlement with some frontage along Marine Parade. It mainly consists of a number of historic red brick or steel clad buildings – Westcliffe House, the Wardroom, a group of seaplane hangars (three of which are Grade II Listed) and former barracks within the site and behind a high brick wall along Richmond Road. The site dates back to 1915 and is now under the protection of the Conservation Area. To the east of the Fleet Air Arm War Memorial, blocks of 1920s married quarters, which are outside of the enclosed site, front onto Richmond Road and provide an interface between the military and the domestic character of the settlement. The Conservation Area Appraisal provides more details on the special character of the area.



Historic hangars



Daedalus – robust red brick buildings

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.75 The key features (see Plan 8) which define the Lee-on-the-Solent’s townscape can be summarised as follows:-

- Broad and extensive length of the public highway and promenade of Marine Parade;
- The 1930s Art Deco style buildings of Marine Parade West and shops;
- The extent of the Lee-on-the-Solent Conservation Area from the sea front including Manor Way and the High Street;
- The panoramic views of the Solent and the Isle of Wight;
- The low density, residential development of eclectic character set in attractive mature gardens based on the 1885 plot plan;
- The landscape setting of the Parish Church of St Faith;
- Long straight views down the main roads of the original grid layout, e.g. High Street, Richmond Road, Montserrat Road, Milvil Road, Grove Road;
- Cherque Farm and its clearly defined and distinct modern building styles;
- The historic military complex and setting of the Daedalus Conservation Area.

Opportunities

2.76 Lee-on-the-Solent is an attractive and popular seaside destination to both live in and visit. It has seen many improvements in recent years to facilities and the public realm, including the promenade and street lighting, as well as an increased number of new flats

in the centre. However, it appears to have reached the 'natural limits' of its growth with the development at Cherque Farm. Any next phase of expansion will therefore be restricted to what is permissible as part of the Daedalus development. The access to the two schools is limited and causes congestion within the locality. Due to its prominence, the area around the old railway station and adjacent car park on the seaward side would benefit from some environmental improvement. There is the need to encourage the retention of the historic division of larger plots of the 1880s grid layout and the tradition for houses being set back from the street behind low boundary walls, hedges or railing as part of the older established urban form. Special consideration should be given to protect the notably larger plots and special character of the historic layout centred on Victoria Square.

Area 7: Rowner, Bridgemaury and Peel Common

Survey

- 2.77 Location and setting: This area forms the north western corner of the Borough extending from the west side of the A32 southwards to the Alver Valley and the north and west boundaries of HMS Sultan. It includes the historic core of Rowner as well as the new Alver Village in the south and the large area of Bridgemaury, Peel Common and Woodcot to the north. The topography is mostly level, but with one or two higher ridges in the south. There are important woodland areas on the south west boundaries.
- 2.78 Historic Context: Prior to the 18th century, Rowner was a 'scattered settlement', with one or two buildings focused on the historic Church of St Mary's (12th Century, Grade I Listed). As mentioned under the Alver Valley Area 5 section, a Saxon settlement was found north of Howe Road. The line of Palmerston forts were built to the south east (including Fort Rowner and Fort Grange) and the railway line came through the eastern part of the area by the middle of the century. Other than the inter-war development along Fareham Road, most development in the area took place from the late 1940s onwards. The area underwent a major change in the 1960s with the development of large areas of Council housing and quarters for military families. This expansion has continued in part up to the present day, where large areas of the MOD housing are now being redeveloped.

Form

- 2.79 This is the most recent of the suburbs having been developed almost entirely since the Second World War. Being virtually separated from the main extent of the old town's expansion northwards by the large swathe of military lands that run from the Harbour side along the Fareham Road and then extends southwards via the historic forts line (see Plan 9), it thus has an entirely late 20th century suburban character. The area can be divided into three main townscape areas: - a) Rowner Village, b) Rowner South/Alver Village and c) which includes Rowner, Bridgemaury, Woodcot and Peel Common. Defining sub areas within this large area of mixed estates is not straightforward and there is a lot of overlap.

(a) Rowner Village

2.80 The historic core of Rowner, comprises the Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin and the adjacent thatched timber-frame and brick encased Rowner Cottages, overlooking a green open space on the south side of Rowner Lane. This grouping has a semi-planned landscape with its wooded backdrop to the north and other than the modern church hall adjacent, provides a historic constant to the locality. There are expanses of managed open grass spaces to the south and a cricket pitch to the east, which ‘protects’ this setting within a ‘modern’ suburb. Rowner Lane forms a loop joining the local distributor Rowner Road just to the north, which marks the start of the post-war residential development in Rowner with its parade of shops and associated services, pub and garage.



Old Rowner

Rowner Road

Rowner Copse lies on the northside of Rowner Road forming an area of important ancient woodland. This also links southwards across Rowner Lane westwards through the housing along the looping St Nicholas Crescent, to the open natural habitats known as the Wild Grounds at the northern end of the Alver Valley.



Linked open spaces

St Nicholas Avenue

(b) Rowner South/Alver Village

2.81 Just to the south of the old settlement, occupying the southern part of the area, is the residential ward of Grange (also known in part as Rowner), bounded by Grange Road and HMS Sultan to the east. This is a mainly flat topography with a couple of higher ridges and is a suburb of the gently curving roads running off the main spine roads of St Nicholas Avenue, Grange Lane and Howe Road. Mainly dating from the 1960s, the area is formed of two storey terrace blocks and some three storey groups, set back from the

roads on small plots, some with gardens and some with communal green lawns. The old military estate and small local centre, around Howe Road, is undergoing redevelopment. There are pockets of green space linked to school playing fields, with some good tree cover. There are occasional street trees on wide verges at the entrances to closes, which often have greens. Along Grange Road a 'new' residential townscape is emerging, the new 'Alver Village', with the large scale redevelopment of the old MOD estates. This is creating a whole new residential form of settlement, using a range of materials and styles, and focused on a new centre with a high-rise tower and supermarket.



Grange flats



New Alver Village

(c) Rowner, Bridgemary, Woodcot and Peel Common

2.82 This post-war residential suburb north of Rowner Road, which includes the districts of Peel Common, Rowner, Bridgemary and Woodcot is a vast residential area with a variety of building styles and with no clearly defined centre. Except for some inter-war development close to the line of the A32 along the north east boundary, most of the area dates from the late 1940s onwards, with more recent housing to the west at Peel Common. The area is a mixture of medium to higher densities arranged in grid layout roads, crescents, closes and communal greens. They are mostly two storey properties – detached, semi-detached and row housing, with areas of flats to a slightly higher scale, and some areas of bungalows.



Beauchamp Avenue



Nobes Avenue

They are set in a range of plots sizes, interspersed with schools, playing fields, recreation grounds and other amenities such as local shopping parades, churches and a few pubs. All are set around a pre-existing rural network of medieval lanes. Many housing groups are set back from access roads or in closes via footpaths in landscaped grounds. There

are also groups of bungalows. Materials are varied but mostly red/brown brick, some render, tile hanging and timber cladding, with concrete tiles and artificial slate for roofs.



Typical close



Splayed layout to Rowner Road

- 2.83 To the east of the old railway line (now the rapid bus route to Gosport), where the area meets the A32, the housing along the route is mostly earlier, inter-war and therefore has a different character from within the estates.



Cunningham Drive



Forest Way – south east corner

- 2.84 Three main local distributors run north from Rowner Road to serve the residential district. Rowner Lane is the older main central north-south spine route through this north part of Rowner and to Bridgemary, which connects to Wych Lane via a staggered junction in the east-west Brewers Lane. At its southern end, Rowner Lane has an attractive short tree-lined avenue, while Wych Lane displays a variety of older house styles particularly as one goes north towards the A32.



Rowner Lane – trees



Wych Lane

The long loop of Titchbourne Way to the east runs north as far as the line of Brewers Lane and then turns east to join the A32. Brewers Lane has a single lane bridge across the former railway line, which together with the bridges on Titchborne Way and Gregson Avenue are the highest points in the locality.



Titchbourne Way



Gregson Avenue bridge

2.85 The area west of Carisbrooke Road and north of Rowner Road defines Peel Common. This has an altogether more modern character and has an attractive and well maintained streetscene.



Peel Common housing



Rowner Road - west

Woodcot is a small locality at the northern end of the loop of Tukes Avenue, extending to meet with Wych Lane.



Wych Lane – north



Woodcot

Other than the shops and local services along Rowner Road, there is no real centre to the area as a whole. Each locality appears to rely upon its own local shopping parade to

serve it (such as Carisbrooke Road, Brewers Lane, Beauchamp Avenue, Bridgemary Avenue, Gregson Avenue, Nobes Avenue and Tukes Way). Some of the 1960s shopping parades, such as those on Nobes Avenue and Tukes Way, are local landmarks. The shops are a focus for social interaction, together with the scattered local pubs, churches, clubs and the library in Brewers Lane. There is a sense of community and schools and local churches obviously play a major role in community life.



Nobes Avenue – shops and pub



Shops on Tukes Avenue

2.86 The area has some major open spaces which greatly contribute to the environment, including school playing fields, large recreation grounds, churchyards and central greens to closes and crescents. There is good tree cover particularly in municipal landscaping to closes. Generally, in the post-sixties housing, the more modern closes have generous grass verges, central greens, trees and footpaths.



Brewers Lane school playing field



Green Crescent – green space

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.87 The key features which define the qualities of Rowner, Grange, Bridgemary, Peel Common and Woodcot are (see Plan 9) as follows:-

- The historic setting of the original village of Rowner, as centred on the Church of St Mary's and its environs;
- The green open spaces either side of Rowner Lane, including the woodland areas of Rowner Copse and Rectory Copse north of Rowner Road;
- Important pockets of green spaces and trees (mostly related to playing fields) in Grange;
- The major open spaces in Bridgemary, including school playing fields, recreation grounds and greens, contribute to the feeling of spaciousness and landscape quality;

- Distribution of small parades of shops and the series of 'communities' created around shops, local facilities and schools;
- New centre and focal point being formed at Alver Village, including a landmark tower.

Opportunities

2.88 This is a large residential suburb the majority of which has been developed since the Second World War. It represents much of the type of development, which is typical of the post-war period from the 1940s to the 1990s. The old MOD estate east of Grange Road, now undergoing a major redevelopment will significantly enhance the area and form a key part of the regeneration of the wider area. While there is no actual main centre, other than perhaps the shopping parade and facilities on Rowner Road, the area appears pretty stable and its strengths are founded upon its more localised community identities within the wider area. There are perhaps some opportunities for environmental improvements to the local shopping parades and their surrounding spaces. Again, the value of sufficient green spaces and tree planting is shown to be particularly valuable in the later housing layouts and these, together with school playing fields and recreation spaces, must be retained and enhanced wherever possible.

Area 8: Sultan and the Historic Fort Line

Survey

2.89 Location and setting: This character area lies in the centre of the urban area, dividing the two main Gosport suburbs, stretching from the Fareham Road A32 at its northern end enclosed by Rowner Road and Grange Road running south as far as the Alver Valley and Privett Road. It follows the alignment of the historic line of forts known as the Palmerston Forts and is essentially a closed military site, (part being the Royal Naval Training Establishment, HMS Sultan). Most of the establishment is on the west side of a central highway (Military Road) which runs the length of the area bounded on the east side with the residential suburbs of Brockhurst Road and Elson in the north and Gomer and Ann's Hill in the south. On the west boundary are the large outer suburbs of Bridgemary and Rowner. The old railway line crosses the area at its northern end. The topography is generally level.

2.90 Historic context: Historically, to the west of the Fareham Road A32, this area was a rural landscape with a small amount of settlement and farms until the 19th Century. The major change came between 1850 and 1860 with the building of the line of five forts running from south to north – Forts Gomer, Grange, Rowner, Brockhurst and Elson (the latter is further north outside of this character area) built to protect Gosport from the threat of a feared landward attack by the French. The construction created both jobs and population growth in the expanding urban area of Gosport. However, the line of forts effectively prevented any urban development westward until after World War Two. The present HMS Sultan was established in 1956 and the area had previously served as one of the earliest airfields in the country and served both the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Navy Air Service. The airfield is now under the new Alver Village

Estate, but some early hangers and ancillary buildings survive within the boundary of HMS Sultan. Open space still dominates the southern end of the area of HMS Sultan. Two of the forts (Rowner and Grange) are within the perimeter of the establishment and continue to be used in part, but Fort Gomer at the southern end has been demolished. Fort Brockhurst is situated on the east side of the A32, adjacent to an employment area and important open space that includes the historic outer earthwork defences (now partly overgrown with tree cover). It is in the ownership of English Heritage who utilise it as a visitor attraction and regional historic building store.

Form

2.91 This linear-shaped character area effectively divides the Gosport suburbs in two (see Plan 10). It is fairly flat and level. With the exception of Fort Brockhurst and its industrial environs north of the Fareham Road, the area comprises almost entirely of HMS Sultan. Fort Brockhurst is a major landmark by the roundabout traffic junction of the A32 and Rowner Road. With its moated area and outer defences, it is a particular distinct landmark in the Borough. All the Forts benefit from statutory protection. To the north and north east of Fort Brockhurst is a small industrial estate of fairly standard service road grid-layout and regular industrial sheds used largely for storage and warehousing. In the more recent development on Heritage Way the open views towards the fort were retained, and with English Heritage’s support, the Borough Council is keen to protect the open space to its north. This open space contextually forms an important link to Fort Elson (which is in Character Area 9) and the setting of the fort and the outworks if these ever were to be restored. Between the two forts there is evidence for earthworks that are clearly contemporary with them.

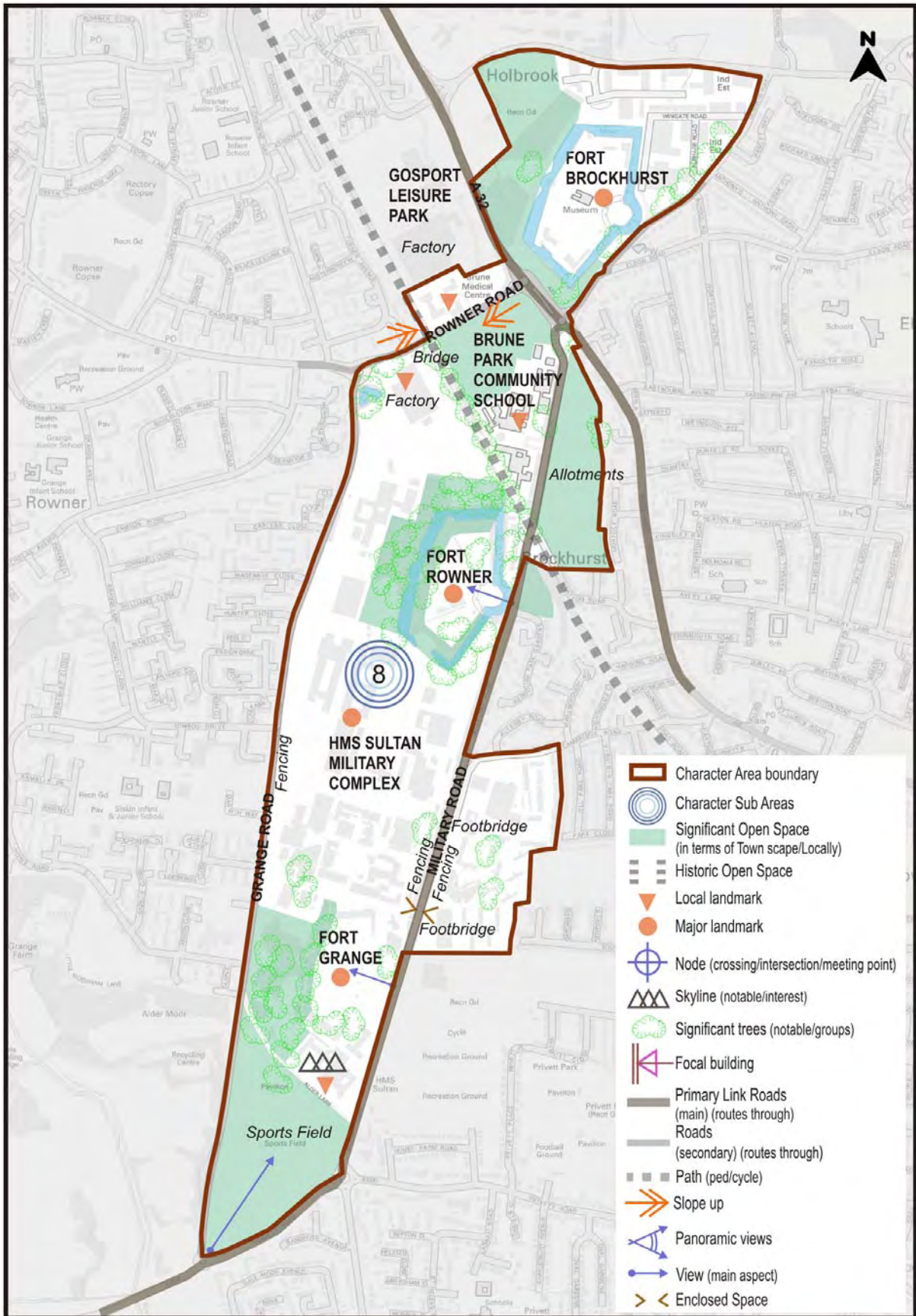


Fort Brockhurst – A32 roundabout



Fort, moat and open space

Plan 10 Sultan and Historic Forts



2.92 Access to HMS Sultan is restricted. It is divided in two by the long north-south Military Road and this is the usual way that the public will view the area, albeit through a 'visual corridor' of the perimeter steel security fencing and some brick walling either side. Two steel footbridges cross the road at approximately the midpoint to allow pedestrian access between the two sides of the complex. The establishment is well ordered internally with good accessibility, tree-lined footpaths, connected car parking areas and open spaces between the buildings. Any buildings have been placed around the two fortifications of Rowner and Grange, both of which are low profile, mass brickwork structures in a polygon plan.



Military Road



Fort behind wirescape

Modern buildings are mostly in the form of industrial-type structures (for example serving as hangers, workshops, offices and classrooms). There are a range of buildings with profile metal claddings, brick and glazing components and low pitched or flat roofs. At the northwest end of the area, adjacent to the A32 lies the modern education complex of the Brune Park Community School, with some allotments on the east side of Military Road and some housing north of Cambridge Road. On the northside of the community school some large industrial sheds front onto the roundabout on Rowner Road and Grange Road. On the northside of Rowner Road extending up to the A32 is the large redevelopment site which includes the town's new leisure centre. On the road frontage is a modern three storey complex of local services and nursing home flats, signalled by the curved elevation of Nelson House.



Brune School



Rowner Road

2.93 Grange Road is also long and straight and largely enclosed on its eastern side by security fencing.



Grange Road north



West boundary

Although there are large areas of 'hard surfacing' on the military sites for functional purposes, a particular feature of this area is the generous amounts of 'soft' open space throughout the two sites, albeit largely restricted to authorised personnel. There are sports fields, recreation spaces, tennis courts, artificial pitches and ancillary areas. The forts themselves are characterised by the large areas of grassed earthworks on their outer defences, although those around Fort Grange have largely been removed. Fort Rowner and Brockhurst have retained their moats. At the southern end of HMS Sultan the area is entirely open green space providing a wide aspect that can be appreciated from the surrounding public roads. This open space has the backdrop of the locally listed 1930s Wardroom. The Sultan sports pitches (also a SINC), at the south end connects up with the bottom of the Alver Valley and Privett Road.



Sultan sports field



Southern end of HMS Sultan

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.94 The key features (see Plan 10) which define the townscape qualities of HMS Sultan and the line of forts are set out below:-

- Fort Brockhurst as a landmark on the north side of the main route (A32) to Gosport together with its spatial setting;
- The long, straight - part tree-lined - route of Military Road dividing the two parts of the highly organised establishment of HMS Sultan;
- The two historic forts of Rowner and Grange and their respective settings subsumed within the western side of HMS Sultan;

- The large, open green space of the MOD sports fields at the southern end of the area, its regimented buildings and its physical relationship with the Alver Valley.

Opportunities

2.95 Most of the character area is under the control of the Ministry of Defence and the areas of public realm only form a small percentage. Therefore, the opportunities for any improvements are limited, except for some further landscaping in the north at the junction between the Rowner Road and the A32 and to the nearby Brockhurst Industrial estate. Consideration should be given to the reuse and restoration of the forts within HMS Sultan as valuable heritage assets of national importance. Their setting, as well as enhancing any views to them, is important to consider. Such an approach should also apply to the concealed Fort Elson at the north point of this fort line. Equally it is important to preserve and enhance the setting of Fort Brockhurst, which is already a significant historic landmark on the main route into the town centre. There is an opportunity here to create a landmark 'gateway' at this nodal point on the large roundabout on the A32.

Area 9: Frater and Bedenham

Survey

2.96 Location and setting: This large area of military and industrial land occupies the north east corner of the Borough boundary between Fareham Creek and the A32, extending southwards to Fort Brockhurst. It includes the areas of Fleetlands, Bedenham and Frater (see Plan 11). A small creek, Bedenham Creek and an inlet Bedenham Lake defines this section of the coastline up to Hoeford Lake at the northern point.

Plan 11 Frater/Bedenham



2.97 **Historic context:** Prior to the 19th Century, this mostly flat coastal plain was entirely rural with only a few buildings. Bedenham (Upper and Lower) and Frater are old place names. The working of Saltings along the coastline from Hoeford to Bedeham was an early activity in the area. With the defence and naval expansion after 1850, this area took on an important role, later added to by the establishment of the Royal Naval Armament Depot at Frater. Within the MOD site Fort Elson, other defence earthworks, and several historic military boundary markers survive. In order to service the navy, industries grew up alongside the harbour side military uses, located mainly along the northern end of the area served from Fareham Road, with the two main estates expanding in the 20th Century. A major explosion took place at Bedenham Pier in July 1950, which shook the whole Harbour area and caused serious damage and injury. This resulted in a planning restriction for development within an eight mile radius for some 40 years thereafter until its lifting.

Form

2.98 This character area is divided into two sub-areas. These are the main north-south public route of a) A32/Frater and the more restricted eastern area extending to the coast referred to as b) Bedenham.

(a) A32 /Frater

2.99 The A32 from Fareham dips sharply on the approach into the Borough as it passes Hoeford Lake, with the industrial area of Fareham Reach on the east side. The large modern sheds impose themselves on the streetscene albeit set back behind landscaping and trees.



A32 entry to Gosport



Fareham Reach frontage

The main road then levels off from the Wych Lane junction and after Lederle Lane both sides of the road frontage then adopt a residential character, which is mostly inter-war ribbon development with a cement works site on the east side besides the Vector Aerospace site. Here the road opens up to a wide grass frontage.



Tree-lined road



Residential character

The west side forms the edge of the large suburb of Bridgemary. The road then takes on a sinuous character, enclosed by trees on both sides up to the junction with Cunningham Drive: identified by the four storey residential block of Juniper House. There is then a section of road with various mixed uses, such as a service garage, pub and mixed residential properties. There are mostly employment uses on the east side.



Cunningham Drive junction



Mixed uses on A32

- 2.100 After this, the slightly 'enclosed' character of the road changes to a wider aspect with the road straightening out and widening up to the traffic junction with Tichbourne Way. On the west side, an estate of bungalows is set well back behind a landscaped verge with its own service road, while on the eastside a more recent three storey block, prominently identifies the Gosport Business Centre. From here to the east is the enclosed military site with its security fencing and formal grid layout. It comprises single storey buildings and 'bunkers' spread out along its roads and extending to the waterfront. On the west side, the housing becomes more modern with the expanse of boundary walls set back behind deep verges, extending to an area known as Holbrook. The southern part is undergoing significant redevelopment with some modern commercial blocks and the Gosport Leisure Park which has already formed a new focus for the area.



Gosport Business Park



Terraced- housing blocks

2.101 On the east side of the road there are a number of rows of formal red brick, terraced housing, before an area of woodland that extends up to Fort Brockhurst. It is an environment along its length that is dominated by the heavy through traffic on this primary route. Just to the north of the fort, is a new 'T' junction to connect the new Heritage Way link road which runs eastwards and separates a single development site and sports fields on the south side of the junction. It is important to retain this existing space between Forts Elson and Brockhurst so as to maintain their setting. At the south eastern corner of this area is an area of woodland used by walkers, a small parking area, and access to the waterside. Fort Elson is currently overgrown and in a 'natural' setting, with significant potential for the fort and its setting to be enhanced.



A32 southern end – 'green gap'



Heritage Way – adjacent employment

2.102 The east side of the A32 consists almost entirely of a series of industrial areas, namely Fareham Reach, the former Cyanamid site, Vector Aerospace, Frater Gate and the Defence Munitions site which extend almost continually along the road frontage from Hoeford Lake southwards to the more recent Heritage Way. They comprise a mix of large modern industrial units on large regular plots, some fronting the A32 at the northern end, in a grid-type layout with some decent trees on the boundaries, but generally well landscaped. Materials are brick with mostly profile grey metal cladding. Part of this area around Lederle Lane is undergoing redevelopment at present. The Vector Aerodrome estate to the south is linear extending towards the waterline and is basic in nature with mostly medium-sized buildings, in grey and buff cladding spread along its length.



Sheds extending to the waterline in Frater



Smaller units – Barwell Lane

(b) Bedenham

2.103 The industrial land to the south, from the Vector Aerodrome site is largely out-of-bounds to the general public behind security fencing, including the Defence Munitions site which also extends to the waterline and as far south as Heritage Way. This contains a large area of open land that has been used over the decades for testing explosives. As this is a restricted area, it is a relatively undisturbed semi-natural landscape and it now has high nature conservation value.

Key Townscape Characteristics

2.104 The key features (see Plan 11) which define the townscape qualities of Frater and Bedenham area as follows:-

- 'Gateway' entrance to the Borough on the A32 over Hoeford Lake and change in level as the road dips to the end of the creek then rises towards Wych Lane;
- Modern large-scale industrial and office buildings in a landscape setting framing the east side of the A32 at the north east approaches;
- Domestic scale and character of inter-war housing fronting the westside of the A32 at its northern end;
- Notable tree cover and open space around Cunningham Drive/A32 junction;
- Wide open aspect of the A32 road south of the Tichbourne Way junction with limited tree cover, contrasting with the military site on the eastside and the 'modern' housing and community uses set back from the road on the west side;
- The military establishments lining the harbour frontage, in particular the heritage asset of Fort Elson;
- The nature conservation value of the undeveloped parts of the waterside land, particularly the Defence Munitions site;
- The archaeological potential of the military defences, saltings and undisturbed sites within the coastal area.

Opportunities

2.105 The area is characterised by flat, open military land adjacent to the harbour with two light industrial sites at the northern end. There are no particular proposals for change in

this area, which is largely dependent upon Ministry of Defence plans for the future. One site in Frater which is of interest, is the open space related to the magazines at the former Royal Armament Depot, together with the western edge of the harbour for its nature conservation and archaeological value. Also to the south, if ever Fort Elson and its immediate surroundings could be opened up for public access, this could provide a valuable heritage and recreation asset. The A32 is the main approach to Gosport by road and heavy traffic dominates the environment along the main route. Although new development is improving the image, there is some scope for making the pedestrian experience better along parts of its length, together with further landscape enhancements to improve both the environment and the public perception.

3.0 CONCLUSION

Gosport's Townscape Character and Opportunities

- 3.1 The main objective of this assessment of Gosport's townscape was to identify the key characteristics which contribute to its image, or its sense of place. There are perhaps two main overarching tests of these features which can be categorised by those experiencing a place, i.e. those features which are 'memorable' (i.e. notable landmarks, identifiable character, views, a sense of arrival) and those which help legibility (i.e. understanding, finding one's way around). This individual view has found Gosport to be rich in its layers of history, urban development and character. It is a place of contrasts, for example, look down a street of small terrace houses and a tall tower is framed at the end; tight urban streets give way to wide open spaces or views across an expanse of water or exposed tidal creek; industrial working environments or military sites sit next to residential areas and modern design is set next to historic buildings. It is never uninteresting.
- 3.2 Gosport has a unique character formed by its promontory location, its coastline, its military heritage and relationship with Portsmouth, which has shaped its formation and its expansion from the original old fortified town position. Viewed from the other side of Portsmouth Harbour, Gosport's low lying position is clear with its skyline only broken by the few residential towers between Forton and the town centre.



Gosport promontory viewed from Portsmouth

A few high points

Plan 1 showed that the urban form of the conurbation between the Solent and Portsmouth Harbour is split into three main parts:-

- 1) The fortified old town and older urban areas ;
 - 2) The outer post-war suburbs west and north of the Palmerston fort line; and
 - 3) Lee-on-the-Solent, a separate settlement to the west of the Alver Valley.
- 3.3 These three main blocks of urban development are separated by three linear areas in the shape of the natural landscape gap of the Alver Valley and Browndown/Stokes Bay which separates Lee-on-the-Solent to the west; the north-south Palmerstonian Fort line which separates the older urban area from the post war-suburbs and connect to the more open MOD land in the north east adjacent to the Harbour side around Frater.

These 'gaps' are not expected to experience any change in the immediate future and nor in the long term.

- 3.4 Within these main development blocks of the town and conurbation, there were identified nine main character areas which were related to a combination of the age of development as well as the style. The main qualities which contribute towards the 'sense of place' in each character area, which are important to protect and enhance were set out in Section 2. These are summarised in the Key Townscape characteristics at the end of each area assessment.
- 3.5 To reinforce the qualities of the individual character areas it is worth taking the three main urban areas which overarch them in turn, summarising the main attributes and opportunities for improvement.
- 3.6 **Old Town and Older Urban Area (Character Areas 1, 2, 3):** The older urban core is an area of great contrasts ranging from unique historic fortifications of national importance, to small Victorian terraces to tower blocks overlooking the Harbour. There are stunning views along the Harbour waterside towards Portsmouth and on the south coast across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. Besides the military buildings, it is rich in character and phases of the different ages and styles of development particularly from the 18th Century onwards, retaining many fine Georgian buildings as well as 19th Century development spread throughout the area. This study has revealed just how complex these interwoven layers of history and development are and this requires more analysis outside of the scope of this assessment. As well as the conservation areas centred on Alverstoke, Bury Road, Stoke Road and Forton, particular areas such as Alverstoke (both its village centre and the northern part with its substantial late 19th Century/Edwardian and inter-war housing) and parts of Elson and Hardway are notable. Bridges at various points around the town afford more intimate views to the pattern of development around.
- 3.7 A significant amount of more recent housing development has taken place and infilled what is termed the Priddy's Hard Estates, some of which has an urban robustness and some style. The Borough Council has prepared a Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document for new residential development, which is designed to ensure a high standard for future housing schemes.
- 3.8 However, any major new development in the future is likely to be concentrated in the town centre and the Gosport Waterfront as part of a continuing planning strategy of regeneration for this area. There are sites along Mumby Road which have fallen into decline and this assessment noted opportunities for improved links between the High Street and the east side of Mumby Road and the Waterside, including the bus station and ferry terminal. Due to the significance of the area this merits more detailed analysis outside of the scope of this initial assessment.



Falkland Gardens - an opportunity



Fort Blockhouse Harbour elevations

There is an opportunity for an enhanced town square to connect with Falkland Gardens at the eastern end of the High Street, to make a fitting urban statement for the centre of Gosport. In this respect, the Waterfront area, between here and Royal Clarence Yard could benefit by some imposing and high quality development. However, any high-rise development should be sensitive to the relationship with the historic scale of the High Street, the pedestrian experience, the traditional boating activities and the significance of the existing promenade and Falkland Gardens. The visual importance of the harbourside elevation of Fort Blockhouse must also be considered in any decisions concerning the future image of Gosport waterfront.



Harbour aspect



Gosport Marina and Rope Quays

3.9 As the major traffic route into Gosport, some extra thought should be given to an overall design vision to enhance the image of the A32, improving and enhancing key places identified in this study.

3.10 **Outer Post-War Suburbs (Character Area 7):** This large residential area has a diverse character with building styles ranging over the post-war period up to the present day. It is an area which has strong local community ties within and although virtually cut off by HMS Sultan from the older part of Gosport, this does not prevent the population from engaging fully with the town. The area is well provided with green spaces, trees and school playing fields. Improvements to the junction and removal of the old railway bridge in Wych Lane, together with the recent 'Eclipse' Rapid Bus service has improved transport for the district. Local shopping parades and local services are important nodes to the area and any landscape improvements in the shopping experience should be encouraged. Local benefits should be realised through the significant change in the

local townscape, revealed with the major redevelopment underway in the new 'Alver Village'.

- 3.11 **Lee-on-the-Solent (Character Area 6):** This settlement which is distinct from the main urban area of Gosport has its own distinct identity, focused on the late Victorian/Edwardian vision and the 1930s seafront development, together with the historic seaplane base of Daedalus. However, there is an opportunity to improve the public area on the seafront at the end of Pier Street and the surroundings of the old railway station. The rest of this popular settlement has a variety of modern housing development, with the most recent in the form of Cherque Farm. Any future major development is likely to be confined to the regeneration of Daedalus.
- 3.12 Gosport as one of the old urban areas within South Hampshire has come a long way since the 1970s when it was still regarded as one of the most deprived urban areas in Hampshire. The town has a unique and rich diversity of military heritage, which makes it nationally and indeed internationally important. This together with its related industrial and domestic development makes for a lively and vital environment. Since the 1980s and the release of MOD land, Gosport has begun to realise its potential. It has suffered through the restrictions of accessibility due to its peninsula location and this still impinges to some extent. This is beginning to be addressed by the introduction of the Bus Rapid Transport scheme via the Eclipse service running along the disused railway and the proposals to improve the Newgate Lane access into the Gosport peninsula. One is aware of the presence of Portsmouth when looking to the east, with the Spinnaker Tower often coming into view from various vantage points within the town. Gosport does not need to emulate this 'cityscape', but there is an opportunity for the town to create its own unique 21st century townscape character for its waterfront. This could include some landmark buildings and public spaces on key sites. So with good planning the future looks promising for Gosport's variety of character, its communities and its unique sense of place.

Appendix 1

The following symbols have been used for notation on the Character Area Plans.



Sub-areas: - which denotes a subdivision or locality within the main character area, which has its own or different identity.



Open Space: - an open 'public' space which is significant.



Historic Gap: - a spatial distance which contributes to the setting of a feature or place.



Landmark: - a major feature of some scale.



Local Feature: - a smaller scale landmark of local interest.



Node: - a strategic 'meeting' point, or intersection or convergence of routes or activity, a foci.



Skyline: - a notable aspect, either large or small, panoramic.



Trees: - significant individual or grouping.



Focal Building: - defining a visual 'gateway', or turning point or termination.



Main Road: - a primary route, with major traffic flows.



Minor/Secondary Road: - a secondary route but of local importance.



Slope-up: - a noticeable change in level in the streetscene.



Panoramic View: - a wide aspect view to distance.



View: - an important and noticeable viewpoint.



Enclosed Space: - a defined sense of enclosure due to the relationship of structures and adjacent spaces in the streetscene.